HISTORICAL PICTURES.

FRENCH REVOLUTION

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OF THE

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Fragonard fils inv.et del. *Coiny aqua forti.* *Malapeau sculp.*

TABLEAUX DE LA REVOLUTION FRANÇAISE.

Sad were the days, now happily no more,
When raging parties France in fetters bound;
Her cities waste, and drench'd her fields with gore,
While virtue wept, and no asylum found.
Valour and genius hail! that peace proclaim,
Drown'd is the voice of faction in these lands,
Honour great Gallia to thy warlike bands,
And let their trophies tell thy lasting fame!

By P. A. Miger.

HISTORICAL PICTURES,

REPRESENTING THE MOST

REMARKABLE EVENTS

WHICH OCCURRED DURING

THE EARLY PERIOD OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION,

WITH A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF

THOSE IMPORTANT TRANSACTIONS;

AND A SERIES OF DISCOURSES ELUCIDATING THE CAUSES WHICH LED TO THAT EVENT.

With Portraits and Historical Memoirs of some of the principal Persons engaged, who have been most eminent for their Virtues or Vices; with Vignette Prints, representing in a spirited and picturesque Manner the most remarkable Event which distinguished each Persons Character.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

M. CHAMPORT,

AND OTHER DISTINGUISHED WRITERS.

THE ORIGINAL DESIGNS AND ENGRAVINGS from which these impressions are now taken were executed by DUPLESSI BERTAUX, COIGNY, FRAGONARD, MALAPEAU, VENY, GIRARDOT, NIQUET, DUPARC, and MEUNIER.

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1803.

BSB
MÜNCHEN

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

HISTORICAL PICTURES

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

THE revolution of 1789 is the result of causes which have been in operation for many ages, the action of which, increased and accelerated in these latter times, has at length arrived at its catastrophe, assisted by a concurrence of circumstances which must be confessed to be miraculous. A slight survey of our history will sufficiently shew the accumulation of evils under which the people suffered, and it will be a subject of astonishment to many, how, groaning under such calamities, they could so long be patient. But it is to the patience of their ancestors that succeeding generations will be indebted for their happiness. Had the revolution taken place at an earlier period, and the ancient edifice been destroyed before the nation, enlightened by its recent luminaries, was possessed of the capacity and power of rebuilding it on a plan of equal grandeur, wisdom, and regularity, France, in the following ages, would not have enjoyed the prosperity reserved for her, and the happiness of posterity would not have been proportioned to the sufferings of their ancestors.

After the emancipation of the commons (for we need not ascend to a higher period, when the people were in the most abject servitude) the french emerged from the state of brutal slavery in which they were sunk, but were, nevertheless, in a comparative bondage. Though less oppressed, and less miserable than before, they were not the less constrained to cringe before their tyrants called *nobles* and *priests*, who had so long constituted the two privileged orders of the state. Some few individuals might perhaps raise themselves from the lower classes by the purchase of nobility, and sometimes the necessity of the

government, but more frequently the avarice of the kings sold to many of their subjects, who were called *roturiers*, a portion of the rights and privileges of the higher orders. An exemption from many of the taxes and services of a debasing nature was the chief of these privileges, the great mass of which, increasing by degrees, fell upon the contributable part of the nation, which beheld its oppressors recruited in its bosom, and the most distinguished of its offspring pass over to its adversaries. The right of conferring nobility, and the abuse attending it, was for many ages, the most galling yoke to the people. The constant wars, and the heavy impositions which were the consequence, made it yet more insupportable. But the most fatal evil was, that they lengthened the reign of ignorance and barbarism.

The revival of letters in the 16th. century was unhappily but little favorable to the liberties of mankind; learning, in its second infancy, consumed its benefits in the barren disputes of religion and the schools; and served little to advance the progress of society. Fifty years of civil war, of which the ambition of the great was the cause, and religion the pretext, plunged France into a state of misery and desolation, from which she did not begin to emerge until the close of the reign of Henry IV. The regency of Mary of Medicis was a scene of weakness, disorder and depredation. At length, under Richelieu, feudal aristocracy fell at the foot-stool of the throne. The people a little relieved, but still enslaved, reckoned upon revenge, and regarded as the happiest event in their favour the fall of those subaltern tyrants under the weight of royal authority. It was doubtless good policy in the minister thus to put an end to the many convulsions which for ages had distracted France, but what was the result? the nobles, no longer formidable to the monarch, were the contented props of his despotism; they were the partners of his power, and exercised the whole authority of the state. Richelieu born in their order, and tainted with all its prejudices, believed that in thus giving them a preference in all offices, he made but a slight compensation for the many advantages of which he had deprived their principal members. They blocked up every avenue to the throne, became masters of the person of the monarch, and the education of his children; and in both they never ceased to instil the principles of the feudal system, connected with a superstitious reverence for ecclesiastics. Thus the commons gained few advantages from these changes, and the priests and nobles were as powerful as before. The dignities, the places and the employments, which more particularly influenced the manners, and gave a direction to the sentiments of the people, were shared by the tools of the nobility. It seemed as if Richelieu had destroyed aristocracy as a rival to monarchy, but had suffered it to exist to the destruction of national prosperity. That haughty spirit of rank, before which the ideas of man and of citizen, have so long vanished in Europe, that spirit, destructive of every social tie, nay of all morality, received then new strength, and penetrated into all classes: it was the empoisoned spring which Richelieu had just divided into many streams. At that period therefore may be remarked a rage for nobility bordering on madness; a political disorder, a national vanity that must finally sap the basis of monarchy, and which we behold at last accomplished.

The enemies of the revolution never cease to applaud the splendor and glory of France under this minister, and the still greater lustre which the victories of the great *Conde* reflected upon the administration of Mazarin. They see nothing in this but a glory for which they cannot account; but where is the wonder that a

nation though sunk in slavery and misery, should, under the administration of a Richelieu, become formidable to spain and Germany, kindoms yet more oppressed and unhappy than herself? With respect to the victories of *Conde*, we know that he was a more able general than any that opposed him. But that which is a subject of triumph to the enemies of the revolution, is the glory of Louis XIV, a man whom a favorable train of circumstances surrounded with the most illustrious characters of the age. Such is the language which has been held of that splendid and disastrous reign, in which we behold an entire nation, alternately vanquished and victorious, but always miserable, deifying a monarch who sacrifised his nation to his court, and his court to himself. The bankruptcy which succeeded this reign did not open the eyes of the people, whose genius had been directed to the cultivation of the fine arts for more than half a century, and who remained still captivated with exterior pomp, and the charms of that luxury which had so long been buried. Titles, honours, and the Great continued to be the subject of their idolatry, even under the same government in which these very idols neglected nothing to debase them. A servitude, no less disgraceful than ridiculous, continued adding to the weight of public grievances, till the middle of the reign of Louis XV.

At length a new spirit appeared in France; the attention was now directed to objects of utility; and the sciences, the seeds of which had been sown in the preceding age, began to produce some happy fruits.

The celebrated Encyclopedia was now published *, a work which, as far as regards the sciences, was doubtless never equalled, and is so far equally honorable to the national talents and national industry.

Voltaire, after having run through the circle of the arts, attacked those superstitious prejudices, the ruin of which he thought necessary to pave the way to that of political truth. A new class of philosophers, disciples of the preceding, directed their labours to the study of social economy, and entered into a profound investigation of those subjects, which had never yet been submitted to enquiry. France was at that time a singular spectacle; it was the country of futilities, where reason came to look for an establishment. The contest was between modern discoveries, and ancient errors strengthened by the authority of a weak and falling government. Two different parties divided the kingdom, on one side were the philosophers, on the other monks, the political economists, and the jansenists, the followers of Rousseau, and the episcopal mandates, the social contract, and proscribed jesuits, exiled parliaments, and persecuted philosophers, such was the chaos from which issued the revolution.

Louis XV died, not less in debt than Louis XIV, and was succeeded by a young monarch of upright intentions, but ignorant of the snares which were laid for him. He called to his assistance the experience of a minister who had been disgraced, but Maurepas in his dotage governed as he lived, for his amusement. Economy and the

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* As it was under the direction of a malevolent party, a party equally disposed against order in government and religion in society, it is but little to be depended upon where either of these are concerned; it is in a word one of those works, which a man of science may consult with profit in the immediate article of his science, but which no good man will either read or commend.

reform of abuses, were the only means of restoring the finances. He had recourse to them, and selected a man whom the public voice pointed out as most capable *; but he checked in the course of reform which began to operate, a minister whose misfortune it was to be called to govern fifteen years too soon, Maurepas sacrificed him, and appointed as his successor a man of equal industry and integrity, whom he clogged, restrained, and interrupted in all his efforts, and, averse to all amelioration, kept in the most submissive dependance. Mean time, he involved France in a foreign alliance, and a foreign war, which compelled the minister of finance either to encrease the public burden by new imposts, or have recourse to loans. The last was the only method of continuing in his office a man, as little agreable to the court as to the prime minister himself. The loans were multiplied, and no economy could pay their interest, M. Necker was dismissed, and an employment no less difficult than perilous passed successively into hands unequal to its duties, which scarcely received before they abandoned the burden.

M. Calonne, distinguished for brilliant talents and active industry, undertook the office, but sunk under its weight; he had to contend with the jealousy of the parliaments and was no less embarrassed by the obstacles which a party threw in his way. His scene of action however was brilliant, and by a happy device he revived public credit for a time; but exhausted by its new efforts, and worn out by its labours, it completed its long course in final destruction. He took the desperate but courageous resolution of convoking an assembly of the notables, in order to lay before them the necessities of the state. The annual deficiency of the finances was then declared, so famous under the name of the *deficit*, a term which passed from the bureaus of the financiers into general use. A loud and general clamour now pursued the minister into his most sacred retreat; he was considered as the first cause of the impending ruin; his concurrence in the dissipations of the court, and his own private dilapidations, were equally the subject of general censure. M. Calonne had endeavoured to subject the two orders of the clergy and the noblesse to the commun contribution, these two orders therefore united with the people, and the kingdom resounded with their concurrent clamour.

It was at this period that the irresistible force of public opinion was first seen in action; it had already obtained a double triumph, that of compelling M. de Maurepas to take a part in the american war, and that of obtaining in the subsequent treaty with the americans the royal acknowledgement of the popular principles of liberty. It was thus that the rights of man may be considered as having first proceeded from the royal chancery itself; and it is thus that despotism is not unfrequently annihilated by itself and its own ministers.

It should not be here omitted, that besides the numerous class of citizens whom the principles of the new philosophy had inspired with an abhorrence to the ancient establishment, there was still another class equally numerous and equally restless. This was the class of politicians, a class of men, whom rather the vanity of bearing a part in great affairs, than any immediate or even most distant interest of their own engaged to become judges of the affairs of state. The works of M. Necker, his *Compte rendu*

* M. Turgot.

and his history of the administration of the finances, had given, if not birth, at least activity to this restless species: every one now imagined himself a minister, or intendant of the finances, and every one became indignant at the continuance of the abuses in the administration. It was thus that the vanity of M. Necker supplied with arms a multitude whose malice would otherwise have been rendered ineffectual by their ignorance; but he lived to repent the imprudence of which himself at length experienced the effects.

M. de Calonne was dismissed: an intrigue of the court raised his enemy, the archbishop of Sens, to the vacant administration, who had long sought the direction of the finances, an office for which of all others he was least adapted. He carried into his administration, principles which would have well suited France a century ago, but which could now only render himself ridiculous. He had hitherto employed the parliaments as an instrument to ruin his rival Calonne, and now proposed to the same parliaments the projects which they had already rejected when proposed by Calonne himself; but the parliaments refused to register them, and the archbishop banished them. The people, with little regard for them, still considered them as the only remaining barrier against the encroachments of despotism, the people therefore ranged themselves upon their side, and the parliament little understanding the secret motives, actually believed themselves possessed of the popular love. They had in fact obtained this temporary favour by the demand they had made for the convocation of the States-general. The archbishop of Sens had been imprudent enough to promise this convocation; he even acknowledged, under the royal seal, the exclusive right of the nation to impose new taxes. In the present situation, and present spirit of the times this blindness of the minister could have been but the effect of divine wrath, which indignant with the general depravity, was now hastening the moment of punishment, and which employed the nation itself as a secondary means to this purpose.

This ministerial declaration of the rights of the nation, though given but as in word, was understood as in deed, and the eyes of the minister were awakened to something of a sense of their true situation by the general clamour excited by the project of the plenary-court. It was necessary to support this absurd invention by the aid of the military, the military however in several provinces, were insufficient against the people, secretly excited by the nobles, the priests, and the parliaments. The nation now exerted against one branch of despotism that force which was soon after found equal to contend with the whole; the result was what might have been expected, the archbishop of Sens was compelled to retire, and M. Necker was again called to the ministry. The government saw that nothing could be done without the convocation of the states, every day, every hour, every moment, proved the force of the people, and the weakness of the government.

M. Necker signalized his entrance upon administration by the recall of the parliaments which the archbishop of Sens had exiled. He called a second assembly of the notables, who undid in 1788, what they had before done in 1787, giving thus a proof that they hated Calonne more than they loved the nation. In vain, however, did the notables, and the parliament unite to render the convocation of the states ineffectual by confining them to the forms of 1614: public opinion, and the persevering ardour of men of letters through the medium of the press, prevailed over every thing. The day on

which M. Necker procured for the people a representation equal to that of the two united orders, gave him greater eclat than the day of public rejoicing on which he was recalled to the ministry. Happy if, after having aided the nation to such a great stride, he had accompanied, or at least followed it! But he stopt short, and it continued its march. In the midst of confusion, such as the sudden downfall of the government occasioned, tbe national assembly continued with courage their immense labours; and notwithstanding the fury of their numerous enemies secret and avowed, in little more than two years accomplished their work. The french people took their rank among free nations, and hence overthrew that political prejudice admitted even by philosophers of our day, that a nation so long sunk in corruption cannot regain its liberty, an odious maxim, and which condemns almost the whole human race to eternal slavery!

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ASSEMBLÉE DES NOTABLES, TENUE A VERSAILLES,

Le 22 Fevrier 1787.

Cette Assemblée fut composée, des Princes, des Officiers de la Couronne, des Secretaires d'Etat, des Pairs du Royaume, de Conseillers d'Etat, de Maîtres des Requêtes, de Maréchaux de France, d'Archevêques et Evêques, de Présidents de Parlements, et Conseils Souverains; enfin de Municipaux de Villes et de Députés d'Etats.

Dans les différentes Séances qui eurent lieu, on y discuta entre-autres plans, ceux de la Subvention Territoriale et de l'Impôt du Timbre; le Roi présida en personne, la première, et la sixième et dernière, qui eut lieu le 25 Mai 1787. Cette Assemblée n'eut d'autre effet que de nécessiter la tenue des Etats Généraux.

HISTORICAL PICTURES

OF

THE EPOCHS

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

FIRST PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

ASSEMBLY OF THE NOTABLES HELD AT VERSAILLES,

FEBRUARY 22 1787.

As the first assembly of the notables, in the month of February 1787, may justly be considered as the commencement of the french revolution, it is necessary to ascend to that period, and to enter upon the detail of those events which were the cause of whatever followed. Upon the death of Louis the XV the crown descended upon the head of the last king of the French, a youth without experience, and a king without any of the talents of reigning. He resolved to supply this defect by a selection of ministers whom his judgment represented as the most able, and of the greatest probity of their age and country; but he unfortunately trusted to his own judgment, and was therefore deceived in his choice. The count de Maurepas, at once the most corrupt and the greastet corrupter of his age, became his tutor and minister, and recalled the parliaments which Maupeou had exiled. The count de Muy, more suited for the cloister than the cabinet, was promoted to the department of War; and with equal ignorance of his proper talent, Sartines was persuaded to accept the Marine. The finances were commited to M. de Clugny, but upon sufficient proofs of his incapacity he was succeeded by Turgot, who had acquired a great and merited reputation as intendant of Limousin; the extent of his views, and the multitude of his projects of reform exposed him to the opposition of a powerful party; his inflexible probity and severity of œconomy hastened his fall. M. Necker, already celebrated as, a Banker, became director-general of the finances. It was the singularity of this minister to

be at once persecuted by flattery and detraction , and what perhaps was more singular , to merit neither ; with the ostentatious promise of a new system , and something of the affectation of stoicism , Necker was still unequal to his situation ; but he enjoyed the confidence of the nation , and his probity was admitted even by his enemies. He introduced the system of loans , and governed the finances of a great empire in the spirit and by the maxims of a provincial banker : like Turgot , he may boast as his greatest elogium his dismissal from a court too prodigal to endure his calculation ; both were alike the sacrifice of the queen and the count d'Artois.

M. Necker was succeeded by M. Joly de Fleury , who imposed a tax of ten sous per livre to be charged indiscriminately upon all the former taxes. He was dismissed with contempt and a pension. M. d'Ormesson , of some repute for his probity and candour , was compelled to assume , and with still more abruptness to lay down , a burden beyond his strength. He was replaced by M. de Calonne , who though branded by the public opinion as an object of distrust , had exerted his wit , and talent of profusion with success in gaining the favour of the court. The notables , however , rejected his projects , and he was compelled to resign his office.

The archbishop of Toulouse , of inferior talents , but of equal profusion , and equal enterprise , proposed to the parliament the same imposts , that of stamps , and the still more obnoxious imposts territorial. The Magistrates availed themselves of the popular clamour against the latter to obtain the rejection of both. Hence the contests of the parliament and the court , and the long succession of injunctions , remonstrances , and arrests , which only terminated by the exile of the parliament to Troyes. The parliament compelled to enter upon its defence by a declaration of its true constitution , and the avowal of its former abuses , confessed to the astonishment of the nation , that they had not the right of consenting to new imposts , and they demanded the convocation of the States-general. The ministers were disconcerted by a demand , the effects of which have been so fatal to the monarchy ; it was received , however , with such ardour amongst the people , and repeated by the parliament with such undeviating firmness , that the King was compelled to consent. The parliaments expected to enjoy the same influence with the states as in 1614. It was their secret purpose to transfer upon the people the imposts with which they beheld themselves menaced.

It cannot be objected to the parliaments that they have ever been too forward in prosecuting the defrauders of the finances. When have they ever interposed their authority to arrest the ruinous progress of taxation? Have they not openly abused and exercised a public traffic of what is justly held as most sacred amongst men , justice and the laws ? Did they not oppose the establishment of the provincial assemblies ? The idols of early times , these ancient corporations , long enjoyed an habitual respect of the people ; but this respect was lost , and the abuses of the parliaments appeared in full light , when after having declared their constitutional incompetency to enregister the edicts of imposition , they had the inconsistency to purchase their return from Troyes by registering the edict for the continuance of the vingtiemes.

The minister resolved to seize this opportunity of establishing a plenary court of taxation , and at once relieve himself both of the parliaments , and states-general. He proposed , as its component parts , the Princes , Peers , and Marshals of France ; together with those of the Magistrates who were wholly devoted to the court. Louis XVI held a royal sitting in the parliament , M. d'Espremesnil , one of the counsellors , poured forth a torrent of eloquence , and animated his audience to an enthusiasm of opposition against the court. The palace was invested with troops. Brienne and Lamoignon were publickly insulted. A new Bussy-le-Clerc , le sieur d'Agoust , entered into the assembly ,

and demanded their victims: « We are all Goislards, and d'Epremesnils, answered the magistrates ». The french, indeed, of this day, were all for d'Epremesnil: they as yet knew not that he was rather the enemy of the minister than the friend of the people, that the sanctuary of justice might not be defiled by any of the excesses, or even by the entrance of the soldiers of the court; two magistrates surrendered themselves voluntarily to the officers. The duke d'Orleans had been previously exiled.

A few days after this sitting appeared the celebrated edicts of the 8 May 1788. At any other period the people would doubtless have received with pleasure the establishment of the greater bailliages as fixed by these edicts; but the general abhorrence of the plenary court united the nation and parliament in one cause. The courageous resistance of the people of Rennes, the eloquent remonstrances of the intermediate chamber of the states of Britanny; the firm, unyeilding, and truly patriotic spirit of the states of Dauphiny, obtained a final triumph over the royal power, and overthrew the plenary court, Lamoignon and Brienne its authors, and the greater bailliages which sprung from the same source; the parliaments were restored to their former powers.

But all this was not without its effect. The frequency of beds of justice, the exile and imprisonment of the parliaments, the confinement of twelve gentlemen of Britanny in the bastille, and finally, the establishment of the plenary court, and the arrest of the magistracy by armed force, excited that general discontent in Paris, and still more in the provinces, which was no uncertain presage of what followed. The citizens had already taken arms at Grenoble.

On the other side, such were the frauds in the finances, that the annals of history can produce few similar examples. The notables contented themselves with stating that the deficit was 140 millions; they separated, and left every thing as they found it: they had proposed every thing and adopted nothing. This assembly was composed of 136 members, but had not been convoked since 1626. It was composed of the princes, the officers of the crown, the secretaries of state, the peers of the realm, and masters, of the requests; together with the marshals of France, the bishops, and archbishops, the presidents of the parliaments, the municipal officers, and deputies of the state. It has been mentioned above that the territorial imposts, and that of stamps were here proposed. The king presided in person at the first, sixth, and last sitting, which was on the 25 May 1787. (1)

M. Necker and the states-general, were the two objects which now solely occupied the public attention, they were regarded as the only instruments of recovering the nation from impendent ruin. It was only the superior reason of the former which could dissipate the darkness, and animate to new life and order, the financial administration; it was only he who could revive confidence, and save the state; the national voice is at length heard, and at length invites the people to liberty. M. Necker re-enters upon his ministry. The states-general are demanded, and the king promises their convocation. The parliaments who had consulted only their own interest, and sought popularity only to augment their own power, now repented their imprudent declaration; but as it was no longer in their power to retard the convocation, they decreed that they could only assemble and deliberate according to the forms of the former assembly of the states in 1614. This completed the ruin of their popularity.

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(1) It must have been evident, however, that the former States-general had been but of very little use. Voltaire has said in his Henriade:

> These states but met as law or Custom pressed,
> Saw all our Wrongs, but never one redressed.

The noblesse, the higher clergy, and the court, made no secret of their purpose to seek a predominant influence in the states; thus to a mass, already about to explode from the action of the contrary principles of its composition, were added the contest of diversity of opinion, of opposed passions, and rival interest, a certain presage of the storm which was about to burst.

Amongst this general contest of opinion, M. Necker was unwilling that the forms of the assemblage of the states should be decided by the counsels of the king. He again convoked the assembly of the notables; from their former firmness he presumed on their future impartiality. He knew not that the greater purposes of the soul had their periods, and were but seldom repeated; the false reasoning of the minister was pregnant with the most fatal effects. The party of the privileged united together, and such was the effect of their union, that M. Necker was compelled to content himself with obtaining for the people such an equality of representation, that the number of the deputies of the tiers-etat should be equal to that of the two other orders together, and the taxes should be equally levied without regard to exemptions.

It was at first believed that the King having convoked the states, and having granted them this equal representation, the Clergy and Noblesse would have renounced their pecuniary privileges, and only have contended for those of a more honorary nature; but this was want of knowledge of mankind. Nothing was in fact done, or even commenced, which had any thing of the harmony of a plan. Whether from design, or more culpable negligence, M. Necker had left almost every thing undetermined. In the letters of convocation no method of election was mentioned; a certain number of deputies, indeed, were to be elected by each order, but the three orders were still left the power of contradicting the spirit even of this regulation. In a word, in this concurrence of the abuses of government, and the general reception of a new and false philosophy, nothing could for a moment arrest the progress of the Revolution.

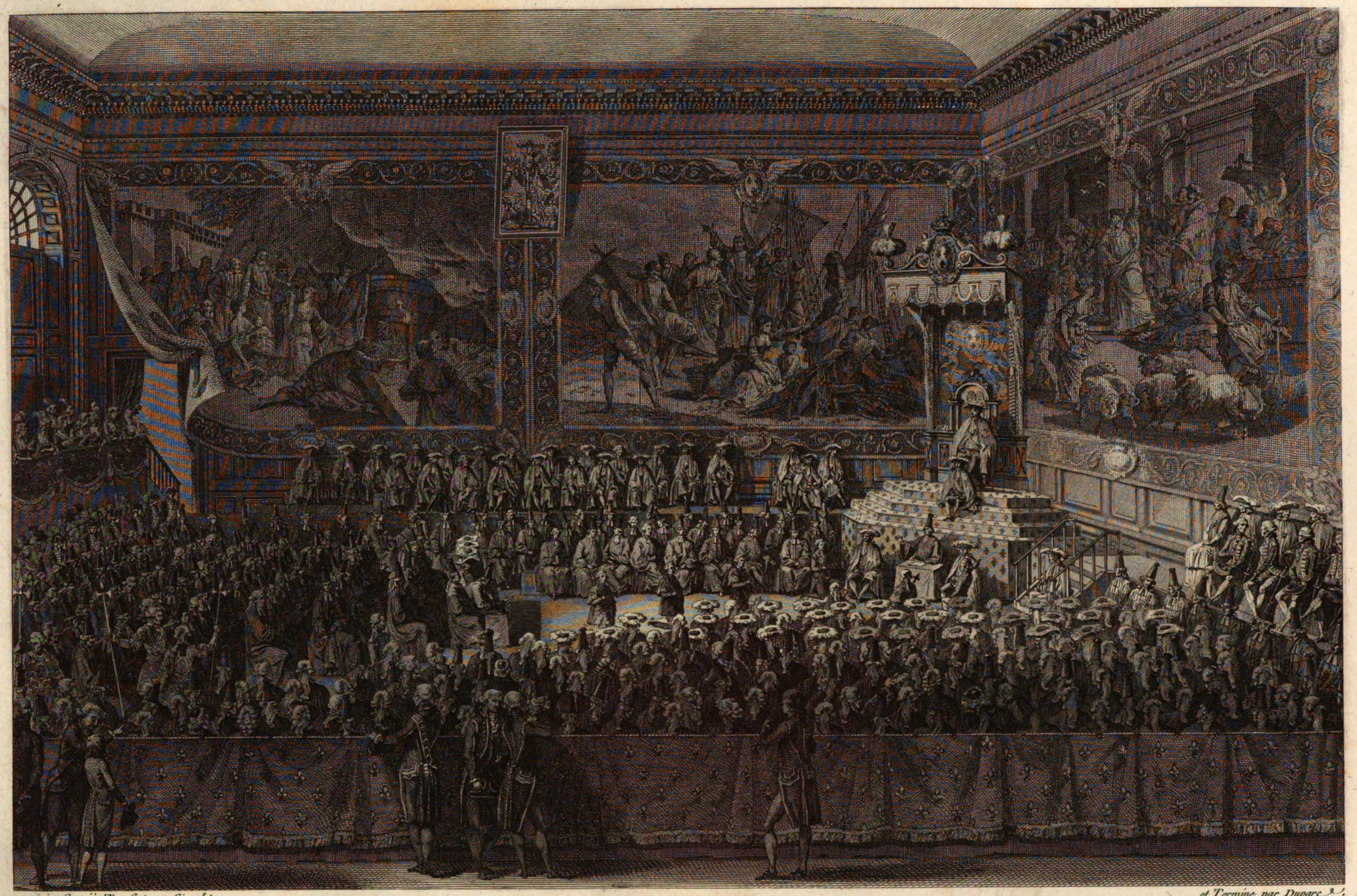
The following is the inscription under the plate of the first Table.

ASSEMBLY OF THE NOTABLES HELD AT VERSAILLES THE 22 FEBRUARY 1787.

This assembly was composed of the Princes, the Officers of the crown, the Secretaries of state, the Peers of the Kingdom, Counsellors of state, Masters of the requests, the Marshals of France, Archbishops and Bishops, Presidents of the parliaments, Sovereign counsels, and finally of the Municipal officers of cities, and Deputies of state.

In the different sittings were discussed, amongst other proposals, those of the stamp-act and the territorial impost. The king presided in the first, sixth, and last sitting; the latter was the 25 May 1787. This assembly had no other effect than that of hastening the call of the states.

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LIT DE JUSTICE TENU A VERSAILLES,
Le 6 Aout 1787.

L'Enregistrement des Edits du Timbre et de la Subvention Territoriale, proposés par le Ministre Calonne, n'ayant pu avoir lieu à cause de la résistance opiniatre du Parlement; le Roi tint son Lit de Justice à Versailles, le 6 Aout 1787, dans les formes usitées, et les Enregistremens ordonnés furent faits en sa présence; mais immediatement après, le Parlement protesta contre ces Actes.

HISTORICAL PICTURES

OF

THE EPOCHS

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

SECOND PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

BED OF JUSTICE HELD AT VERSAILLES,

AUGUST 6 1789.

How culpable are those ministers, who, abusing the confidence of a Monarch whose good intentions merit a better fate, lead him finally to a violence of conduct, as fatal as unnatural to his character! The commencement of the reign of Louis XVI will be known to posterity but by its acts of beneficence. But when ministers abused his authority to an excess which no history can parallel, he was compelled to those fatal means of which despotism has ever availed itself in its purpose of oppression. Such was the Bed of justice held at Versailles.

This must not be considered as one of those minute events of temporary interest, it is worthy the reflection of legislators, and will fix the attention of posterity. It is true indeed that the attention of distant ages will chiefly attach to the greater causes, and more signal effects, which have produced or followed the French revolution; but when they shall repeat the names of those citizens by whose virtue the Republic was founded, they may wish to follow despotism in its progress, to behold its efforts, and triumph in its impotence.

It not unfrequently happens in human affairs, that circumstances of little individual interest assume a character of importance from the dignity of the events which they produce. In a revolution so memorable as that of France, even the most trivial of circumstances will be seized with avidity. Should such details lose something of their estimation as they become remote from the æra of their occurrence, they must still be regarded with interest by contemporaries. It is not however to this rank that the Bed of

justice held at Versailles in August 1787, belongs; it is one of the most important events, and in its immediate effect contributed to weaken the authority of the ministers.

It is from this epoch that those scenes commence, which are at once the terror, and admiration of mankind. And can history produce a greater spectacle than that of an immense empire aspiring to its regeneration, and seeking to renew the basis of that social fabric which might at once shelter and protect twenty-five millions of men? If there can exist a picture which may justly summon the attention of the world, is it not that which can thus present an assembled nation, compelled to withdraw from a form of government established by a long succession of ages, to a form in principle and pretension exactly opposed to the former? compelled to defend the new fabric of its liberty against the attack of despotism; the contention of rival factions, and the united efforts of all the ministers, clergy, nobility, and parliaments, who lost everything in the change! It is to the nation alone that the revolution owes both its origin and establishment. During the long course of the revolutionary storms the language of the nation was the same: « I am equally at War with those who govern, and who aspire to govern me, and even with those whom myself have chosen. I watch over every thing, and rely only upon myself. » It is thus that it has seen so many factions alternately rise, govern, and fall; these again replaced by other factions, who have suffered the same fate. It has been its fate to contend equally against the open and secret attacks of the despotism of ministers; it has been persecuted to the full extent of that atrocity which the nature of Wickedness is capable; and in the midst of a deficit of finances beyond the powers of calculation has been compelled to support a war as bloody as expensive.

M. Necker had already proposed means to the amount of twenty-five millions, these means were very insufficient; M. Calonne imposed in turn the territorial impost, this was doubtless a great resource, but the notables and the parliament united in its rejection. It is our purpose, to enter here into some examination of the conduct of two ministers who acted so principal a part in the events which immediately preceded the revolution. This review will lead to observations of some importance, and will unfold to the reader the true state of the public treasure at this period.

It is easier to form a judgement of M. Calonne than of his predecessor; and it is agreed by all parties that Calonne was possessed of great talents, but that they were rendered ineffectual by his immorality and extravagance. With regard to M. Necker, if he sometimes appear unequal to his situation, and sink, in a comparison with the greater luminaries of his age, it must be confessed that his integrity was beyond a doubt, and that he never deviated from those principles of probity which should equally govern the minister and the citizen. He rejected in his writings, as in his conduct, any distinction with regard to the obligations of morality betwen public and private life, between the man and the minister. It is thus in his address to the states-general against the infamy of a proposed state-bankruptcy, he exclaimed with ardour, yes gentlemen, I declare to you, by the command of the sovereign, and under the sanction of his express authority, that there is but one principle of ardour, one principle of national policy, of real effect, and permanent fruits, and that this is an unyielding morality.

Such principles in a minister should secure him the public veneration, in Necker they were principles of conduct, and not the common-place of declamation. A suitable gravity of manners and deportment accompanied this purity of morals. In a word the character of Necker was greater than his genius, and his soul was more elevated

than his projects. This judgement is rather a tribute of hommage to his virtues, than a censure upon his defects; in the history of nations will be found fewer examples of ministers who have obtained the public esteem by their virtues, than of those who have procured it by the splendor of their genius. If in some of his discourses to the states-general his principles appear to relax something of their stoic severity, it can be imputed only to the singular difficulty of his situation. He had to make his way through the contending pretentions of the three orders: as a minister of the king it was not his duty to sacrifice the rights of the throne, as the minister of popular favour how could he withhold those rights which the people demanded with such increasing clamour?

It is to one of these causes we must attribute that apparent contradiction between the first explanations which M. Necker gave on the question of the deficit, and those which were afterwards added in his discourse upon the subject. He ascended to a period prior to his *compte rendu*, and differed little from the system of M. Calonne, in a pamphlet which that minister had published as well to expose the errors of the *compte rendu*, as to justify himself. The unexpected conformity of these celebrated adversaries astonished all who had read their contradictory publications. Possibly M. Necker was unwilling to interrupt the tranquillity of so solemn a day, as that on which he had invited all the orders to concord and unity of opinion, by opening subjects of dispute before them, or calling their attention to questions of private misunderstanding.

Those who took any side in this dispute, may be said only to have hazarded a judgement; since the origin of the deficit is a question, which we want materials to examine, before we can decide with impartiality. Posterity alone must be heard on this subject.

The discourse of M. Necker explains the means he proposed to remedy the deficit; and in the regeneration of public credit were seen the astonishing resources of France.

The obstacles of a great minister, struggling to save a nation, may be conceived not to have been few; they retarded, indeed, for sometime the progress of his work. He only proposed provisionary arrangements. « The simple abolition of the tax *corvée*, said he, will give an æra to the States of 1789 ». He enforced the necessity of being on guard against new opinions, but what did he mean by new opinions? If he meant the extravagant declamations of fanatic writers which tended to confound the proper subordinations of society, we agree with him that they merited public disapprobation; but if he meant in that class of new opinions, the sacred principles which restrain authority within proper bounds, which leave the citizen no power to fear but the law; these opinions, far from being new, are the most ancient, since they are founded on reason which has been the same at all times, and in all places.

Weakness and imbecillity affix the reproach of novelty to the best improvements of the age. Custom and establishment are the common arguments of tyranny and ignorance. Thus M. Necker is reproached with only walking in the ancient track and never raising himself to the level of his situation. It is certain that he had nothing of that genius which can at once embrace both the general and minute details, and that even his greatest views were marked with a timidity which sufficiently demonstrated the narrow limits of his mind.

But should this reproach be just, and that minister only be allowed to possess talents

of a secondary order, in times of so much difficulty and danger he was only the more useful on that account. Genius of an enterprising nature is dangerous at the eve and dawn of great revolutions. Enthusiasm is naturally joined with genius, which knows not how to direct, to treat with or compose the various passions of mankind. With an imprudent confidence it rushes against every obstacle, and hurried too far by its natural vigour, renders even its best efforts ineffectual.

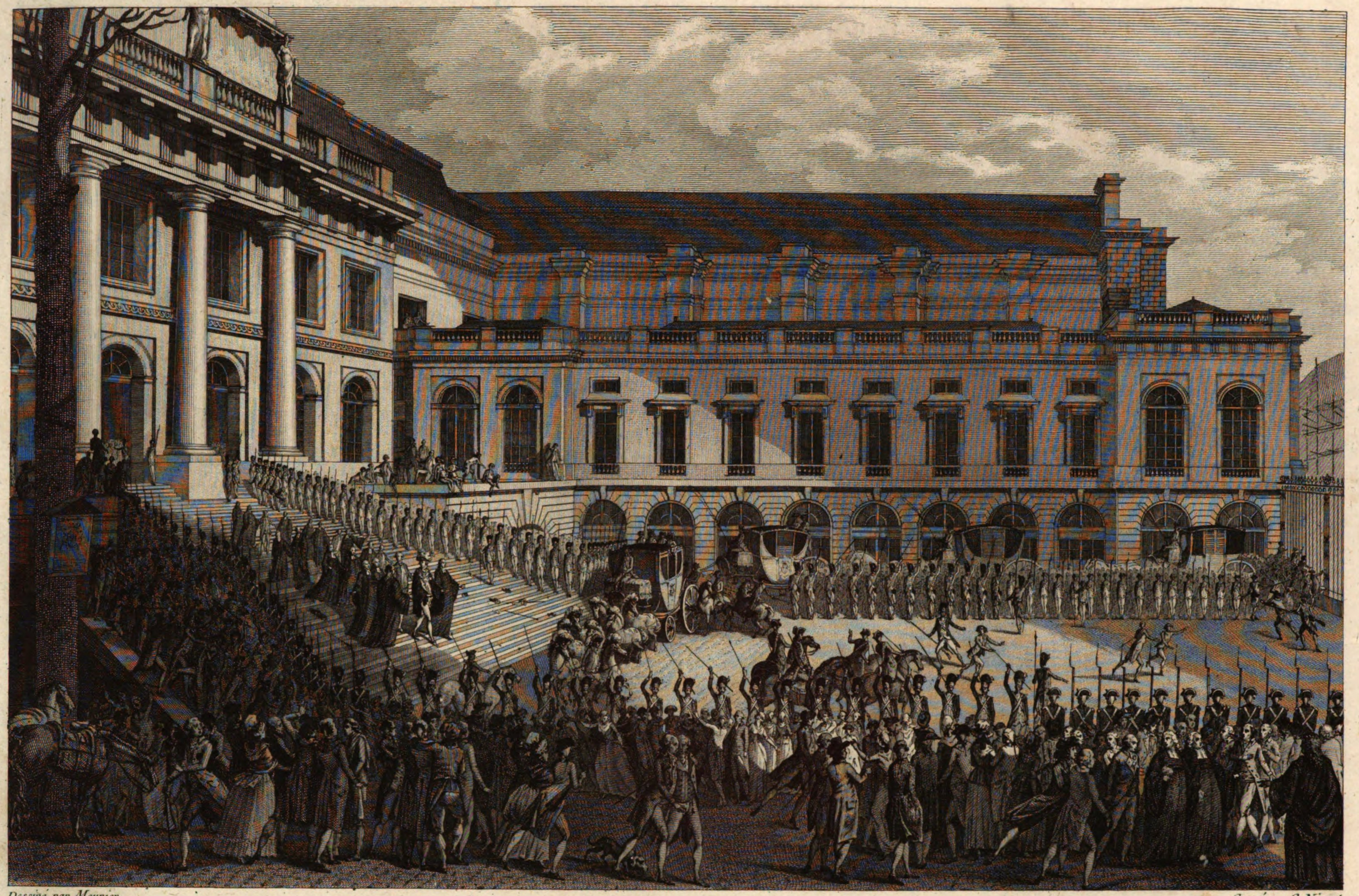
We have sufficiently explained in the preceding table all that occurred in the assembly of the notables, of whom it was composed, and on what account it rejected the plans of M. Calonne. The notables spent time in vain projects disbursed great sums without any service to the state, and returned to their provinces with unfavourable prejudices against the court, without deserving to be thought better of themselves. The cardinal Lomenie de Brienne archbishop of Sens, after the expulsion of M. Calonne, was appointed super-intendant of the finances. He was a minister of the same character with him he displaced, conceited, immoral, prodigal, and devoted to the court; bold in his resources, and not without talents. Lamoignon, president of the parliament of Paris, was named keeper of the seals, and succeded *Hue Miromesnil.* These two men joined together to supply the deficit, and finished by adopting the same imposts which Calonne had fruitlessly endeavoured to get passed, those upon stamps, and the territorial act. The enregistering of these edicts being opposed by the obstinacy of the parliament, the king held a bed of justice at Versailles, August 5 1787, where they were made in his presence after the usual forms, but the parliament immediately protested against these acts. The consequences of this protestation are shewn in our other tables; we shall finish this with an observation, which does not seem indifferent, and which results from the curious resemblance between the discourses pronounced in the bed of justice, and those at the opening of the States-General. In August 1787 the language of the king was arbitrary to excess; in May 1789, it was moderate, paternal, and full of the principles of good government. In the bed of justice the king rendered himself odious from an ignorance too common among monarchs, that of not considering as their worst enemies the ministers who persuade them to excesses which alienate the affections of their people. At the States-General, on the contrary, Louis XVI appeared with the majesty of a king, and the tenderness of a father. Let us forget the discourse of 1787, and exhibit a passage of that of 1789. « A general inquietude (we quote his own expressions) a boundless desire of innovations, have taken possession of all minds, and will end in the total destruction of all opinions, if we do not hasten to fix it by a union of wise and moderate councils. »

To front the Plate of the second Table.

BED OF JUSTICE HELD AT VERSAILLES AUGUST 6 1787.

The enregistering of the edicts of stamps and territorial aid proposed by the minister Calonne, being rejected by the osbtinacy of the parliament, the king held his bed of justice at Versailles August 6 1787, after the usual forms, and the registrations were made in his presence; but immediately afterwards the parliament protested against these acts.

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CHARLES-PHILIPPE D'ARTOIS, SORTANT DE LA COUR DES AIDES DE PARIS,

Le 17 Aout 1787.

Le second frere du Roi, etant venu le 17 Aout 1787 faire enregistrer à la Cour des Aides, les deux Edits du Timbre et de la Subvention Territoriale; le peuple qui vit dans cet Acte de l'autorité Royale une injure aux Magistrats alors dans sa faveur, manifesta son ressentiment dans la Cour du Palais.

HISTORICAL PICTURES

OF

THE EPOCHS

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

THE THIRD PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

CH.-PHILIP D'ARTOIS COMING OUT OF THE COURT OF AIDS.

AUGUST 17 1787.

THE depredation of the finances was one of the chief causes of the French revolution, and dug the abyss which finally ingulphed her monarchy. Extravagance, folly, and dissipation, were carried to a most unexampled height, it is necessary to our present purpose to ascend to the causes of this abuse.

During the reign of Louis XIV every thing was in the hands of the chiefs of the French noblesse, who constituted his court: they dismissed ministers, nominated generals, disposed of places, and directed all affairs. The power of this faction was supported by their coalition with the nobility in the provinces; it was thus that all the offices of the state, the ministry, foreign embassies, and the household, were solely occupied by them. These intriguers commanded the armies, governed the provinces, and engrossed all the favours, pensions, and dignities of the court. The inferior part of the nobility concurred in the support of this general aggrandisement of their order; they saw nothing more in this monopoly of all the honors and offices of the state, but the means of raising themselves in their turn to greater distinction and opulence.

In a memorial, in 1614, the Noblesse dared among other things to demand that of a general precedence over all the officers of the court, and the presidents of the supreme tribunals not of their own order; and that all embassies should be confined exclusively to themselves. They demanded, in the same memorial, that à distinction should be made between such as were ennobled by offices, and such as were noble through generations; that none but the latter should be permitted the use of arms; that the daughters of the Nobility should be prohibited marrying persons *of mean and abject condition*, without the consent of four of their principal relations; and that all pensions to

persons of the Tiers-État should be suppressed. It concluded with a demand that the noblesse should be exempt from arrestation in trials lost against plebeians; and that they should establish a distinction of dress according to conditions, etc.

These claims were more humiliating to the national pride than any way burdensome to the state. The Nobility, however, soon procured a power and influence still more fatal; not only considering themselves as a privileged class, but as constituting the nation in their own body: they exerted themselves only in the discovery of new channels to dissipate the public treasure, and to preserve their unjust monopoly of all civil, military, and ecclesiastical offices of the state.

Thus was France plunged into a real state of anarchy. In spite of the wise laws and good police which the reign of Louis XIV produced, every district, every village was harrassed by these signorial claims, nor did the evil stop there; the same persons, and property were frequently the subject of a multitude of these claims, and the weight of the yoke was thus doubled, or trebled upon the neck of the passive vassal. The french nation under this despotism of a thousand tyrants presented a sorrowful spectacle: a great and brilliant empire, it is true, but without harmony in the different classes of citizens that composed it; and in which two such opposite orders of men were established, that the one seemed, by their prerogatives to stand in the rank of sovereigns, while the others appeared degraded in the most humiliating characters of servitude. From the moment a man entered the class of nobles, the state became his debtor, and he owed nothing further to the state: offices, pensions, and court-favours were for him alone. To such a point was corruption grown that nobles were continually demanding one or other of these—without caring whether the downfal of the state might not one day be the result of their extravagant petitions. When every place was occupied, new ones were created for them—or ancient placemen retired with a pension equivalent, to make room for their importuning successors. And the same office though frequently an useless one, was shared among many titles.

Under the regency, and the remainder of the reign of Louis the XV, the evil increased; and, notwithstanding the economical character of Louis XVI, the abuse gained its utmost height during his reign. Every examen of the causes of this enormous deficit availed nothing but to reveal new crimes: it was discovered that the list of these secret pensioners was preserved in a court-register, or *livre rouge*, and the national assembly at length demanded its being exposed to public view. Their sollicitations were at first fruitless, for the *livre rouge* contained exact accounts of the fatal and profligate extravagance of Louis XV. The King was unwilling to raise the veil which covered the vices of his grandfather; but the assembly at length prevailed, and the *livre rouge* was produced to their committee, on condition that their inquiries should extend no further back than to the commencement of his own reign. It was thus delivered to the commissioners at the house of M Necker, and in the presence of M. Montmorin. Faithful to the principles of the constituent assembly who had appointed them upon this committee of inquiry, the commissioners accepted the condition, and commenced their examen of the *livre rouge* from the beginning of the reign of Louis XVI.

This famous book is a register of court expences, containing 122 leaves of dutch imperial paper, the make of D. and C. Blaauw, having for device *Pro patriâ et libertate*, and bound in red morocco. Each article of expence is written by the hand of the comptroller-general, and confirmed by the king's initial, L.... in his own hand. Thus appeared in the same book

the signatures of the several succeeding ministers, Terray, Turgot, Clugny, Necker, Fleury, Ormesson, Calonne, Forqueux, Lambert, and Necker again. The amount of the several articles upon the *livre rouge* from 1774 to 1789, was 227,285,517 livres, about ten million pounds sterling. Under the ministry of Calonne only, Monsieur had received 13,824,000 livres, and M. d'Artois 14,550,000. This latter prince had moreover received 7,500,000 livres for the payment of his debts, independent of an annual revenue of another million. M. de Polignac in recompense of his services received a gift of 1,200,000 livres; and it contained another grant somewhat singular, of 44 livres, 4 sous, to a sergeant in the regiment of Flanders, for having contributed by his valour to the taking of Uderstalt.

M. Necker and M. Calonne asserted that the amount of the annual pensions was short of 28 millions of livres; they amounted however to 70 millions: and it appeared, from the publication of the royal-register that 860 millions had been dissipated in gratuitous grants within the space of eight years. To support the fabric of public credit, sinking beneath this incumbent load of debt, M. Necker saw no other resource than the formation of a new treasury of the Household, which might at once fix the daily expenditure, and preside over the receipt and administration of the civil list. This plan however was deemed insufficient and therefore rejected. M. Necker proposed but without success, a general and voluntary gift of the fourth of the national income. It was then that the assembly decreed the issue of four hundred millions of assignats. It is not without malignity that this species of currency has been confounded with that paper money so justly obnoxious to the most celebrated writers upon finance; the assignats had a security peculiar to themselves, and though the circumstances of the war, and the frauds of the administrators, caused an emission of them to an amount which terminated in their fatal depreciation, the safety of the state must be imputed to this sole cause. It is a just subject of reproach to M. Necker, that he neither proposed, nor supported, what was thus doubtless of public benefit; he forgot that there are moments in the fortune of states, as in that of individuals, when prudence requires that every thing must be hazarded. We allow that his situation was of singular difficulty, but it is in such difficulties only that ability is displayed in the invention of suitable resources.

The above circumstances are all posterior to the event which is the subject of our historic picture; they were all connected however with the subject of the finances, and thus united under the same point of view exhibit the whole of this important affair in a clearer light. A reflection of some importance here suggests itself; it was the boast of Calonne that the several parts of his system for the liquidation of the state-debt were so well connected with each other, that the omission of any one part would destroy the whole, and in this he did not deceive the king. His system was indeed so well connected, and intimately blended, that had the notables adopted the whole, the parliaments would have assaulted it in vain: it would have been a rock against which all their efforts could only have beat with impotent fury. The component parts of the assembly of notables ensured the rejection of this system. The princes, the peers, the prelates, were not such as were likely to adopt a plan, the first object of which was the sacrifice of the privileges of the nobility.

Cardinal de Brienne, archbishop of Sens, succeeding to Calonne, had the title of superintendant of the finances, and thus the inspection over the comptrollers-general. Lamoignon president of the parliament of Paris, had been previously advanced to the office of keeper of the seals, as successor to Hue Miromesnil. They both united in the same purpose, that

of proposing for the support of public credit a project which might be supported by public opinion. It must be confessed that their part was not without difficulty: Brienne, who possessed some reputation for ability in political œconomy, though he had written nothing upon the subject, borrowed all the plans of Calonne, and presented them to the parliament.

The parliament however rejected them, and published its declaration, that the right of imposing new taxes belonged only to the states-general. In a bed of justice held for the purpose, the king caused the edicts to be registered, and banished the parliament of Paris to Troyes.

The second brother of the king was charged with the office of procuring the same registration at the court of Aids, and departed upon this commission the 17 August 1787. The people, who saw, in this act of royal authority, an infringement of the rights of the magistracy, who at that period enjoyed their favour, expressed their resentment in the court of the palace, and but for the numerous guard which attended him, the count d'Artois might have fallen a victim to this popular insurrection.

We shall not here enter into a detail of all the effects which were produced by these imprudent acts, and which the government was not in a situation to support. We shall at present content ourselves with mentioning the more immediate events which were caused by this contest of the court and parliament. All the efforts of the falling government not only failed of their effect, but concurred to precipitate it with still greater velocity towards its ruin. Such was the projet of the plenary-court and the six greater bailiwicks to limit the power of the parliaments. Brienne and Lamoignon laboured jointly at this great work. Epremesnil, a counsellor of the parliaments of Paris, obtained by a bribe the copy of the edicts, and revealed the secret of the ministers. The parliaments throughout the kingdom united in a common cause. The plenary-court, and the grand bailiwicks vanished: the first fell a victim to the general clamour of the people, the second to the universal resistance of the whole profession of the Law. Brienne abandoned the ministry, and Necker was his successor in the finances. It was this minister, or rather the concurrence of insuperable difficulties which determined the court to convoke the states. From this moment new opposition begot new contest, and the storm was thus prepared, the explosion of which involved every thing in a common ruin. The clouds were already collected, and through the discord of mutual attraction, and mutual repulsion, were already approaching to that encounter, the effect of which was to pervade the world, and rend asunder that sacred veil with which the prejudice of ages had concealed the innate deformity of despotism.

To front the third Table.

CHARLES PHILIP D'ARTOIS COMING OUT OF THE COURT OF AIDS,

August 17 1787.

The count d'Artois in his return from the court of Aids, where he had attended to register the two edicts of the territorial impost, and the stamp-tax, is pursued by the clamour of the people, who seeing, in this act of royal authority, a violence upon a magistracy at that time in their favour, express their resentment in the court of the palace.

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Dessiné par Meunier, et Girardet. *Gravé par Cl. Niquet.*

SÉANCE EXTRAORDINAIRE TENUE PAR LOUIS XVI, AU PALAIS,

Le 19 Novembre 1787.

Le Roi fait enregistrer un Edit portant création d'un Emprunt pendant cinq ans. Lorsqu'il eut prononcé d'autorité l'enregistrement, le Duc d'Orléans se leva, et demanda au Roi si c'étoit un Lit de Justice, ou une Séance Royale. Il lui fut répondu Roy.te Alors il protesta contre cet enregistrement comme illégal.

HISTORICAL PICTURES

OF

THE EPOCHS

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

FOURTH PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

EXTRAORDINARY SITTING HELD BY LOUIS XVI,

AT THE PALACE OF JUSTICE,

IN PARIS NOVEMBER 19, 1787.

THE event which is the subject of this tablet, is one of the most important of the reign of Louis XVI; it is one of those which hastened the approach of that revolution, the history of which we here describe. The abuse of the royal authority, which was in some measure made necessary by the disorders of the finances, alienated the minds, and added to the discontent of those who would otherwise have rallied to the support of the monarchy.

It was in this *extraordinary sitting* that the duke of Orléans first began to grow popular; but in order to understand the temper of the times, and to pronounce upon the conduct of Louis XVI with candour and circumspection, it is necessary to trace events of a higher period.

Louis XIV ascended the throne at a time when the civil wars had inflamed the minds of all his subjects, and his reign forms a remarkable epoch in the history of the world: the french lost all thoughts of their own slavery in the lustre of their conquests, in the charms of the fine arts, and in the pleasures which opulence and luxury bestow. Louis XIV was carried away by the love of splendour, and a passion for conquest. It was under his reign that pride and a propensity to expences, succeeded the loyalty and simplicity of our ancestors; the prodigality of the king and court ruined the nation; but there was a species of grandeur even in this profusion. The national sense of the foibles of Louis XIV were lost in admiration of his greatness — in the remembrance of feudal chains — and horrors of the civil wars. The nation was intoxicated with his success; it was, however, the intoxication of glory, for such is the name which the prejudices of mankind have attached to the barbarous folly of conquest.

The ambition of giving laws to Europe led him into endless wars; he forgot that wars were only just when they could not be avoided. The support of the armies exhausted the treasury, and forty years of false glory were expiated only by such calamitous events as were calculated to humble both the people and the monarch.

The regent appears to have exceeded in audacity the folly and profusion of Louis XIV: the one, even in the midst of his foibles had caused the nation to be respected; the other degraded it in the eyes of Europe. In the stews of vulgar debauchery he sought a man whose very name shocks the imagination, * and made him a pontiff! can it be believed, that he crowned him with the vacant mitre of Fenelon? He considered the nation but as a fit appendage to complete his *suite* of prostitutes; his government was one continued Revel. It was under his regency that the idea of starving the people was first conceived; it was that period which gave rise to those monopolists whom succeeding monarchs have enrolled into a company, and, as the purposes of their tyranny required, employed as their most active instruments. It was this æra that completed the corruption of public morals: commencing at the court, as its source, the stream of dissolution divided into innumerable channels, and, with the precipitate force of a torrent, bore every restraint before it, and deluged the nation. The altars themselves were no security against the violence of the flood; the sanctity of Priests, the chastity of women, and patriotism of citizens, were all involved in a common ruin. The regent was desirous of averting public bankruptcy; and Law attacked the disease of the times with his creation of *Paper;* it is needless to say he wanted the necessary vigour to restore the machine to its original sufficiency.

The disease encreased during the reign of Louis XV; voluptuous, and indolent, he at length was wholly surrendered to debauchery; his harlots made or un-made his generals and ministers; and the state was the common prey of all. The chancellor Maupeou so far forgot all shame and decency that he adopted as his cousin a prostitute of the meanest birth. The duke de Choiseuil had subdued the king, and even madam de Pompadour to his ascendency; madam Dubarri and M. d'Aiguillon leagued against him; the duke de Choiseul was not without talents, and though a courtier, had something of elevation of mind; he was expelled the ministry, and the government then reached its lowest point of degradation.

The abbey Terray, not having the power of raising money, plundered the nation in the name of the king; his exactions were only less odious than himself. France was then a prey to the despotism of many masters; to the ministers and their subalterns, the clergy, nobility and the lawyers. But the nation wearied with such abuse and contempt of its sufferings, and indignant at a luxury which grew from its calamities, began to shake off its profound and inveterate lethargy, and awoke from a dream of a thousand years; and the tomb of Louis XV was inscribed with the contempt of that nation which had so long cherished him as an idol.

He died May 10, 1774. Louis XVI received on the same day the homage of the princes of the blood: a deputation of the parliament went to him at the château of Muette, 5th June, to assure him of the devotion of the court of peers. The king, by an edict of the same month, remitted the tax called accession-right, (joyeux avènement) and promised to pay the debts contracted by his predecessors. His intentions were just and paternal, but he knew not at that time the immense debts of the crown. On the

* Cardinal Dubois.

twelfth of November, the same year he re-established in their functions the magistrates who composed the parliament of Paris before the æra of 1771. The same change was made the following year in the parliaments of the provinces, and the great courts of the ancient magistracy. November 12, 1776, the king held a bed of justice at Versailles, in which he enregistered the edict for suppressing the corvée, and that of purveyance for the high ways; and converted this tax, which fell upon the poorest classes, into a pecuniary impost, charged without distinction upon all the people. The execution of this law excited a universal appeal from the superior courts, who claimed an exemption from all taxes : the clamour was so great, that Louis XVI was compelled to withdraw an edict, so truly just, by a declaration of the 11th August, following, and registered in parliament the 19th. of the same month. At that period the monarch was known only by acts of justice and benevolence; whilst the superior courts alone opposed the execution of his good intentions. The revolution which punished such men can never be too much applauded. In following the course of this reign to the states-general of 1789, we shall every where find the courts persisting in a conduct no less culpable than imprudent: but let us resume the thread of our narrative.

War was not openly declared between France and England till in the beginning of 1778; but a rupture was unavoidable. Captain Tronjoly, commander of *le brillant*, a ship of the line, had been attacked in the month of April, by two english frigates and had beat them off: England had taken Pondichery, and seized the property of many French merchants. The cabinet of St. James justified itself on the score of France having assisted the american revolters.

Silas Dean was then residing at Paris, as envoy from the congress of Philadelphia; but the court of Versailles did not openly acknowledge him. Doctor Franklin arrived in France with the secret intention of supporting the rights of the Colonies — rights, which had not yet been recognized in their metropolis. He appeared to all men a worthy citizen, overwhelmed with the misfortunes of his country, and seeking a peaceful asylum in which he might deplore them in safety. He lived in Paris with philosophic dignity, and in all the simplicity of a patriarch : he excited a lively interest; but the french court, far from treating him as a man invested with a public charge, in compliance with the representations of lord Stormont, the english ambassador, had laid a heavy restraint upon the commerce of the Americans in the ports of France, which, any wise permitted, had been the subject of loud complaint on the part of England, and who, at that very time had dared to insult french merchant-men, in sight of their own coast.

Louis XVI, exempt from ambition, and convinced that a war even though successful, would present an invincible obstacle to the restoration of the finances, declared hostilities with repugnance, and embraced with reluctance the cause of the Americans. But the greatness of their cause of contest spread an enthusiasm of admiration throughout the nation. The revolters, whose affairs carried them to France, were received with overflowing affection; the openness, the simplicity of their manners won upon the confidence of the French, and every thing was offered them which the subsisting treaties between France and England could admit. They were supplied with the necessaries of war, arms, ammunition, expert Engineers, and officers of approved talents and high reputation to discipline their own less experienced and newly levied soldiery. At length, France openly acknowledged the independance of America, and the consequence was immediate war with England· incredible was the influence of this transaction upon the french revolution.

The death of M. de Vergennes, happening at a time when the first Symptoms of dissolution appeared in the machine of government, charged the king with an office the most difficult, for he left it in the most critical state. The council of the king was composed of *Tonnelier de Breteuil*, minister of Paris; *Montmorin*, minister of foreign affairs; *Lomenie*, minister of war; *Luzerne*, minister of the marine; and *Calonne*, minister of the finances: *Hue Miromesnil* was entrusted with the seals. During the four years in which *Calonne* had succeded d'Ormesson, the disorder of the finances had rapidly increased; nevertheless, by different and secret methods, the taxes had been augmented more than a hundred millions, and were raised to 560 millions; but the expences still exceeded the receipts by a hundred and ten millions at the end of 1787. The ministers could no longer obtain loans; they were convinced that there was no resource for the government but in a new distribution of taxes, without any augmentation, which had now become impossible.

To attain this object M. de Calonne only augmented the number of provincial assemblies, for this was an idea of *Turgot*, but in their composition, he gave the commons the principal influence, which might be the means of showing them the way to equalize the taxes, and provide that the burthen should fall upon the nobles as well as on themselves.

It was feared, and the event has justified the apprehension, that the parliaments would oppose this innovation, and which was the true cause of convoking the notables, who were to discuss matters of the utmost importance — and many of whom were already in public favour. It was proposed to grant an equality of rights, to non-catholics as well as catholics. The stamp-tax, and the suppression of the taille, replaced by the territorial aid, charged upon all property, as well on that of the lord as of his vassal.

The parliament rejected the territorial impost and the edict for stamps: they were enregistered in the bed of justice, but the provincial parliaments, without exception, refused them. The parliament of Paris was banished to Troyes. The king declared that he would convoke the States-general, but as if desirous to elude this promise, he commanded the creation of successive loans to the amount of four hundred and twenty millions for five years. The parliament of Paris was recalled, after having promised to enregister the loans in the royal sitting. It was this that gave rise to the extraordinary sitting, the subject of this tablet. When Louis XVI had pronounced the order of registration, the duke of Orleans rose, and demanded of the king, if he then held a bed of justice or a royal sitting? hewas answered a royal sitting: he then protested against the registration as illegal: he was banished to his own estate, and the vengeance which he vowed on the occasion was what induced him to form that vast and powerful faction which deluged France with blood, and disgraced that æra of the revolution.

To front the fourth Table.

EXTRAORDINARY SITTING HELD BY LOUIS XVI AT THE PALACE,

November 19, 1787.

The king requires the enregistering of an edict for creating a loan for five years: when he had pronounced the order of registration, the duke of Orleans rose, and demanded of the king, if he held a bed of justice or a royal sitting? on being answered *a royal sitting*, he protested agasint the registration as illegal.

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Dessiné par Veny et Girardet.

Gravé par Cl. Niquet.

ARESTATION DE D'ÉPRÉMESNIL ET GOISLARD, 9
Le 6 Mai 1788, 9

Le Conseiller d'Eprémesnil ayant découvert le projet d'édit du Cardinal de Loménie, concernant la Cour Plénière, et l'ayant dénoncé au Parlement qui le fit avorter par le fameux Arrêté du 3 Mai. fut enlevé par Vincent d'Agoust ainsi que son collegue Goislard, et conduit par Ordre de la Cour le 1.er aux Isles S.te Marguerite et le 2.d au Chateau de Pierre-en-Cise.

HISTORICAL PICTURES

OF

THE EPOCHS

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

FIFTH PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

ARRESTATION OF D'EPREMESNIL AND GOISLARD, COUNSELLORS OF THE PARLIAMENT OF PARIS,

MAY 6, 1788.

THE subject of this plate, on several accounts, deserves the notice of the historian. It belongs to the first events of the revolution, and as it is one of its causes, may serve in a great measure as a clue to the rest.

It will equally interest the philosopher and the observer, by its political connection, as just hinted, or by the singular contrasts, and curious anecdotes in the life of d'Epremesnil; a man who used so many efforts to obtain celebrity, and who in reality had abundant means of immortalizing himself, had he been firm and undeviating in his political career. In considering him as an author and a magistrate, it will not for a moment be disputed that he had great talents and much knowledge: he attracted public attention, and well deserved it, in the disputes between the parliaments and ministers. And it must also be observed, that he displayed an energy of character in circumstances of the greatest difficulty and danger: it was then his voice thundered against the abuses of authority. Far from being intimidated by ministerial vengeance, he faced every danger for the love of liberty, and joined his courage to those who dared to defend it.

Banishment, which was the reward of his virtuous conduct, was to him a glorious triumph, and till then he justly deserved it: he rejoiced therefore at being a victim in so good a cause. Thus, when he was afterwards recalled from his exile, all the towns through

which he passed on his return to Paris, gave him the most honorable and flattering reception.

This first view of the political life of d'Epremesnil would encourage us to hope, that in becoming a member of the States-general of 1789, liberty would find in him one of her most ardent defenders; nevertheless, by a fatality which cannot be explained, but by attributing it to those base and fluctuating passions, to vanity, or self-interest, he appeared on a sudden one of the warmest partisans of despotism, and liberty had no enemy more decided than himself, at the same time none more impotent. It is necessary to observe that he had not published at that time any of those discourses, in which we may discover those talents of oratory, and that vehemence of eloquence, which were admired in him during the first commotions of the state.

Before we retrace his conduct during the constituent assembly, we shall ascend to the first circumstances which made him known.

Jacques Duval d'Epremesnil was a native of Pondichery, and had an uncle in India much distinguished in the affair of general Lally, who was condemned to death on the charge of treason against his country. The efforts of the son of that general, before the late parliament of Rouen, in order to wipe out the stain from his father's memory, are not forgotten. Two champions mounted on the stage and prepared for combat: on one side appeared the son of the unfortunate general who perished on the scaffold; on the other the nephew of the man who had called down the vengeance of his country upon the unhappy victim. The situation of the two combattants interested the public differently; the first had the best cause to defend; fiilial piety represented him in a view which seized upon the hearts and feelings of all, and the impression he made surpassed the effects of the best oratory. But the case of the second, d'Epremesnil, was less interesting; he had to repel the calumnies which were thrown upon the memory of his uncle, who was the accuser of Lally, and who had brought a general officier to the scaffold. It certainly required great talents to lessen the odium of such conduct, and d'Epremesnil collected all the vigour of his mind, and all the powers of eloquence in the defence of his cause: he painted Lally as a traitor to the country which adopted him, as stained with unexampled cruelties, and devoured by insatiable avarice: the frightful picture which he drew of his conduct in India excited the detestation of his auditors: But when they heard Lally-Tolendal enter upon the justification of his father with the most ravishing eloquence, the accents of nature, and feelings the most acutely sensible, their prayers were again offered up for his success, so true it is, that whatever bears the mark of honorable sentiments excites the most lively impression in feeling souls.

Although, on many accounts, this contest was unequal, it convinced the world of the talents of d'Epremesnil: from that time he was admitted to the rank of the most distinguished magistrates; nothing of importance was transacted in the parliament of Paris in which ne was not principally concerned, and he laboured incessantly in opposing the court and its acts of authority.

The events which took place upon the registration of many of the obnoxious edicts are already known, but we must here recall some of the circumstances to enable us to judge what d'Epremesnil was, and what he afterwards became.

The remembrance of the disastrous epochs of the ministry of the archbishop of Sens,

Brienne, and his confederacy with Lamoignon, the keeper of the seals, will never be forgotten by frenchmen; they will recollect with horror the efforts of these two partisans of the throne to rivet the chains of slavery upon a nation which had groaned under them through such a series of ages. With this view they established a private press at versailles, from which proceeded all the projects esteemed necessary to the success of their machiavilian cause. D'Epremesnil was most active in discovering the plots of these ministers, as well as of those who were accessaries in their projects, and in spite of the mysteriousness with which Brienne and Lamoignon carried on their operations, and the military force which was employed to intimidate, he gradually came to the knowledge of their secret, and, in one of the assemblies of the chambers of the late parliament, he tore away the veil, and showed the deep abyss into which the court was about to plunge the nation. « Let us all swear, he exclaimed, adressing himself to his colleagues, « to reject every thing which bears the stamp of these ministerial presses, and perish « rather than suffer their execution ».

This oath was pronounced by all the members of the parliament; and in order to excite a storm, they decreed that the assembly of the chambers should be permanent. This conduct alarmed the two ministers, in their rage they resolved to make an example. A *lettre de cachet* was issued against d'Epremesnil, and another magistrate, Goislard, who had exposed their vexations and misconduct in the receipt of the *vingtiemes*. Their satellites were sent to arrest the two counsellors, and to conduct them by order of the court, d'Epremesnil to St. Marguerite, and Goislard to the chateau of Pierre in Cise at Lyons. The arrest was executed in the following manner: they first tried to seize them at their own houses, or in those they were known to frequent in Paris; but missing them there, they repaired to the palace, where they had taken refuge, and where the parliament declared them under the protection of the law. The chambers were then assembled and they sent a deputation to Versailles. The day was past in vain expectation; the ministers, perceiving that the parliament remained assembled, and braved their authority, had recourse to violence. At midnight several battalions in arms, preceded by their pioneers, with axes mounted, advanced towards the palace; their commander d'Agoust, entered the great chamber, and demanded the surrender of the two victims marked out by the court: « We are all d'Epremesnil and Goislard, answered the magistrates ». At length about five in the morning these two counsellors, in order to prevent violence, delivered themeslves into the hands of the satellites of despotism.

This firm and courageous conduct endeared d'Epremesnil to all the friends of liberty. During his exile his name was mentioned with every wish that was expressed for the downfall of tyranny, and it must be confessed appearances were in his favour. It is only in his subsequent conduct that we see he was more the enemy of the ministers than the friend of the people; and that his attack upon them was in order to fix the attention of the court, and thus pave the way to his own power: a plan which frequently succeeds with the opposition members in the parliament of England. These remarks are sufficient for us to form an opinion upon this epoch of his life.

We have considered d'Epremesnil as an orator and a magistrate; and we must now recount his conduct as a deputy to the first constituant assembly.

Till then he had vigorously opposed every excess of power, but, from the first day of his appearance in the national assembly, it was perceived that his principles were changed,

or rather that in the bottom of his heart he had always been a partisan of despotism. The motion which he made at the end of the session of the constituant assembly will be long remembered; it had for its object the sending of a deputation to the court, to implore, in effect, pardon of the king for their attempts to weaken his authority. Since then he never ceased to be the champion of the counter-revolutionists; he often mixed in their groups and made the most seditious proposals, during the sitting of the legislative assembly. He was perceived in one of these groups, out of which he was dragged in a violent manner, and covered with wounds. He was rescued only by being conducted to the prison of the *Abbaye*, from which he was released in a few days.

D'Epremesnil, seeing himself the object of public hatred, retired to an estate which he possessed in the *commune of havre.* His name was too famous, not to subject him to the law passed against the *suspected:* he was arrested, and conducted to one of the prisons of Paris, where he was detained until the month of May 1793, and then carried to the revolutionary tribunal with Thouret and Chapelier. The strangeness of his destiny is worthy remark, when we behold him in the same prison with Chapelier his zealous antagonist, during the constituant assembly. By a sequel of that destiny which had hitherto comprehended both in one common calamity through all its gradations, they found themselves placed side by side in the same cart, « which of us, said Chapelier, as they were getting up, will the people hoot at now? « At both, replied d'Epremesnil, and he was perfectly right.

Thus perished d'Epremesnil, at the age of 48, after having first acted a brilliant character, and afterwards its most ridiculous contrast; and concluding by a conduct worse than imprudent; changing all at once the principles that directed his career, and showing himself one of the most decided enemies of the revolution, without any dégree of care, or any hope of success. We may hence conclude, that he had one of those heated imaginations which generally bewilder and lead to excess, and terminate in the ruin of those who are thus unhappily organized.

Inscription under the plate.

ARRESTATION OF D'EPREMESNIL AND GOISLARD,

May 8, 1788.

The counsellor d'Epremesnil having discovered the project of the edict of cardinal de Lomenie, concerning the plenary-court, and having denounced it to the parliament who annulled it by the famous decree of the 3 May, was arrested by Vincent d'Agoust with his colleague Goislard, and conducted by order of the court, the former to one of the isles of St. Marguerite, the latter to the chateau of Pierre in Cise.

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Dessiné et Gravé à l'Eau forte par Girardet.

et Terminé par Cl. Niquet.

INCENDIE DU CORPS DE GARDE SUR LE PONT NEUF.

Le 29 Aout 1788.

Cet Incendie eut lieu à l'occasion d'une Rixe qui se passa entre le Peuple et le Guet à pied et à Cheval, qui le chargea sur les Trotoirs des differens Quais. C'est alors que le Peuple se vengea en mettant le feu au Corps de garde. Il brula sur la place Dauphine l'effigie des Minis.tres Brienne et La Moignon. On forma un Bucher avec les Guérites et autres dépouilles des differens Postes de la garde du Guet, et des Claies des Marchandes de Volaille du quai des Augustins ou de la Vallée.

HISTORICAL PICTURES

OF

THE EPOCHS

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

SIXTH PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

BURNING OF THE CORPS DE GARDE UPON THE PONT-NEUF, AT PARIS.

AUGUST 29, 1788.

We must ascend to an early period in tracing the cause of this insurrectional event. Before the french had succeeded in throwing off the yoke which long habit had taught them to idolize, they had passed through every gradation of oppression. For what indeed do the annals of the french monarchy present to the attentive reader of its history, but a long succession, a melancholy series of public calamities, from the increasing power of despotism, and the prodigality of the government? The kingdom changed masters; but administration and ministers neither changed principles nor method: momentary success, and long disasters; ruinous measures adopted; or wise plans abandoned on the slightest pretext; such is the summary of its gloomy history.

Clovis, notwithstanding his great qualities, was a tyrant and a barbarian. His descendants had merely the shadow of power; for the sceptre in reality was in the hands of the mayors of the palace. Among these mayors Pepin became distinguished, who availing himself of the nullity of the king, and the dreadful anarchy into which the nation was plunged, easily seized a crown which seemed to belong to any one who was bold enough to lay hands on it. The reigning family, and not the people, suffered from this revolution, which transfered the throne to Pepin the father of Charles Martel, and the grand-father of Charlemagne. It was in fact indifferent to the people whether they were governed by the powerful mayors under nominal kings, or by the mayors under a new dynasty, as kings in their own person.

Charlemagne established a government which had but one defect, that of the mixture of two powers, the civil and military, which should ever be kept asunder. This confusion existed till the final ruin of the feudal government, that is to say, till the ministry of cardinal Richelieu.

The successors of Charlemagne suffered the nobility to govern on the ruins of royal power; and it may easily be conceived that the nation was then more oppressed, and more wretched in every point of view. The few good laws still existing soon disappeared amidst the wantonness of so many different despots; the people were held in bondage by a multitude of laws equally barbarous and absurd: such was the feudal government.

Hugh Capet seized the throne from the descendants of Charlemagne, as Pepin had usurped it from those of Clovis; but there was little harmony between the king and his greater vassals for the purposes of government; for every baron considered himself as absolute upon his own territories. Two laws of the ancient constitution however still continued, that of the general homage due to the king, and that of making a final appeal to the monarch in person. These two laws drew after them the whole feudal system; of such consequence is that imprudence, which upon felling the trunk has the weakness to leave the sprouts.

The minister Suger first taught Louis the wise lesson, that *the fewer slaves he could reckon, the more subjects he might boast;* and that he should consider himself as king of France, and not of this or that order of citizens. He persuaded him to establish the communes, and emancipate the inhabitants of the cities, as the only effectual barrier against the power of the nobles, now become the rivals of the throne, Louis le Gros gave the serfs of his domains the rights of burgage tenure, and the privilege of electing mayors and sheriffs. By slow degrees the municipal government of cities was introduced. Under Philip Augustus France resumed its rank among nations, for the first time since Charlemagne, a rank it ought never to have lost.

St. Louis may be justly represented upon the throne, between justice and wisdom. The principles of the government were as yet unempoisoned by the infusion of that italian policy which Charles VIII introduced.

Philip le Bel, a dissipated prince, in order to obtain money to supply his necessities, introduced the expedient of convoking the states-general. Indeed, to confess the truth, till the memorable æra of 1789, the states were seldom convoked for any other purpose.

Louis, surnamed le Hutin, will be for ever celebrated in french history for having passed that memorable law by which he declared, that nature having made all men free, and his kingdom being called the kingdom of franks, they should be in reality what they were in name.

Under Philip de Valois arose the rival claims to the throne of two princes, each supported by the *salique* law. The true sense of that law has been long determined. But Edward the third seized every opportunity of gratifying his revenge: hence began the fatal rivality between France and England, and which caused six hundred years of murder and pillage. The government was nearly the same under Charles the wise; but

the derangement of Charles VI plunged the state into all the horrors of intestine wars, and France was deluged in blood.

Louis XI, Richelieu, and Louis XIV demonstrated that nobles are not a sufficient barrier against the designs of despotism; and the people were again the victims of new struggles between kings and lords. Louis XI reigned with as much ferocity as nero, and died as miserable as that emperor, or Charles IX: thus should all tyrants perish!

Under François I, the restoration of the arts and sciences introduced a spirit of literature, which gave birth to that of philosophy, and to which succeeded a spirit of legislation. But we only consider here whatever may be connected with the state of the nation under each reign, or at least at every remarkable period.

France was then in a most wretched state, both from waste and civil wars; and the still more deplorable reigns which followed that of François I, until the death of Louis XIV, present nothing but shocking examples of the evils that spring from the ambition of the great, and the rage of superstition. It was under François I, and Henry his successor that those civil wars began which desolated the kingdom, until the reign of Henry IV.

From the reunion of the great fiefs of the crown, the feudal government no longer existed, or at least had ceased to be dangerous. But if the barons were no longer a species of sovereigns, they were nevertheless too powerful. They gave rise to the league, and that long war, in which one half of France destroyed the other; in which we behold a king *, ferocious by instinct, and in the flower of his age, at the voice of a queen equally barbarous **, murdering in one night a hundred thousand of his subjects!

Sully, under Henry IV, resisted the insatiable avidity of the nobles, and the victories of his master paved the way for their ruin. Richelieu under Louis XIII completely humbled their power. The government became firm and vigorous, but still despotic; this was to the nation no more than a change of masters, and a source of oppression of another kind. From that time we date the commencement of ministerial despotism, the most burdensome, and perhaps, the most fatal of any; this it was that caused so many wars and the final destruction of the finances; this it was, which by violent acts of authority hastened the revolution, and in that the ruin of the throne. The event, which this plate represents, is a proof of what we have just affirmed: we perceive in it the manner in which the ministers sported with the lives of the citizens. France was deprived for five months of her tribunals and magistrates. The terror of the public force still withheld the people of Paris; but the imprudence, and cruelty of the ministers, in whose department the city was, and the violence of the commander of the watch, removed the last restraint which was opposed to their power, in making the day of a patriotic festival the scene of blood and carnage. The youths of the capital had asked permission of the lieutenant of the police to express public marks of joy, which they felt upon the dismission of Brienne and Lamoignon; they assembled at the *place Dauphine*, and paraded with a figure representing one of the disgraced ministers, Brienne, which they burnt with certain ceremonies. They attempted to assemble next day, but the chevalier Dubois, commander of the watch, opposed their meeting: he ordered an attack upon the people, and to fire upon all that presented themselves. Many were wounded and a few lost their lives. The

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* Charles IX.

** Catherine de Medicis.

people rallied, disarmed and stript the soldiers, burnt their regimentals; and, with sentiments of commiseration which did them honour, sent them home in safety. It may be seen by this that the people are never ferocious, but when headed by wicked men.

This crime could only be supported by a still greater: the provoked youths entering the *place de Greve*, where some of the troops were posted, and whom the night concealed, were attacked by redoubled charges, and many were left dead on the ground.

The retreat of M. de Lamoignon led to the re-commencement of the same scenes. Two bodies of troops entered at the same time by the two extremities of St. Denis street and made a horrible slaughter. A similar massacre took place in Mêlée-street where the chevalier Dubois lived. He was ordered before the parliament, the major appeared in his name, and presented an order from superior authority. The parliament decreed an information against the authors of the massacre; but under the pretext of prudence, which could not justify the weakness of the magistrates, they did not prosecute their decree. It was thus that a mad government accustomed the people to revenge themselves for want of laws, taking blood for blood. The french guards reflected upon the cruel orders that they had been forced to execute; they felt that their oath engaged them to defend the country, and not to oppress it.

It was another dispute of the same nature, between the people and the horse patrole, which produced the burning of the *corps de garde* on the new bridge. The people were resolved to revenge themselves for the cruelty with which the patrole had fired upon the crowds of harmless passengers, from the mere wantonness of petty power. They proceeded to burn in effigy the person of the chevalier Dubois, the commander of that guard, together with those of the ministers Brienne and Lamoignon, and formed their pile for this purpose with the centry-boxes of the watch, and the coops of the poulterers.

From this moment commenced the war between the people and their governors, and from that day the former knew their force, and the latter had a presentiment of those terrible periods which have annihilated the ministers and their power, the monarch and the monarchy. The burning of the *corps de garde* set fire to that train which in a short time was to destroy those who imprudently excited popular fury. They prepared with their own hands, the bolts that fell upon their heads, and they might have considered the first insurrection, of the people like the roaring of the troubled waves, which portend to the terrified pilot, the tempest, shipwreck and death.

Picture.

BURNING OF THE CORPS DE GARDE UPON THE PONT-NEUF.

August 29, 1788.

This burning was occasioned by a dispute between the people, and the horse and foot watch, who had imprudently charged upon the foot-paths in the different streets. The people revenged themselves by setting fire to the *corps de garde*. The persons of Brienne and Lamoignon were burned in effigy, and a pile was formed for this purpose, with the centry-boxes of the watch and the coops of the poulterers.

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Gravé par Cl. Niquet.

RASSEMBLEMENT SUR LE PONT-NEUF,

Le 16 Septembre 1788.

Depuis plusieurs jours le peuple se rassembloit sur la place du Pont-Neuf. Il faisoit saluer et mettre à genoux les passans devant la Statue de Henry IV.

HISTORICAL PICTURES

OF

THE EPOCHS

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

SEVENTH PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

THE PEOPLE COMPEL ALL WHO PASS OVER THE PONT-NEUF TO SALUTE THE STATUE OF HENRY IV.

SEPTEMBER 16, 1788.

This plate presents one of the grandest lessons which history can offer to governments. Should any one demand, in what circumstances the people of Paris assembled on the Pont-Neuf, compelling the passengers to fall on their knees before the statue of the best of kings, this would be the answer: it was at the eve of that tremenduous revolution which abolished monarchy in France, and in that place destroyed that very statue, where it had so lately been an object of veneration. In fine, it was at a period when the finances were ruined, and the powers of despotism swelled to an intolerable height; when the exile of the parliaments, and the commencement of disorders of every kind, rendered the yoke still heavier upon the people, and finished in alienating and exasperating their minds. Such were the sentiments of the times; and such appeared to be the language of the people to their governors: « Authority is committed to you for the good of those whom « you call subjects; the people are just, and will be your willing support, so long « as you deserve their love: but if you abandon them, they will abandon you. » This great and important truth is the basis of that veneration which the people entertained for the memory of Henry IV, which no vicissitudes of time, no revolutions of government will ever diminish. But to place this truth in a clearer light, and render it yet more instructive, we shall proceed further to develop, and strengthen it by the incontestable facts which the history of nations records, and particularly that of the french government.

Did not the tyranny of the Arabians excite the spaniards to shake off the yoke? did not the vexatious oppressions of Philipp II, give to Holland her liberty? would not the swedes have languished in the mines of Dalecarlia, if the kings of Denmark had not imprudently displayed the standard of arbitrary power? was it not in the bosom of slavery that the swiss recovered their freedom? or would America ever have rebelled but for the oppression of the mother country? Thus because frenchmen were oppressed, vexed, and pillaged in a thousand different ways, and with an insolence of scorn without example, they sprung up, like a giant from his sleep, for the recovery of their long lost rights. The people most distinguished for their loyalty have thrown off their yoke, and broken their chains with the most furious impetuosity, and given to despotism its most irrecoverable blow. The history of this ancient government is inseparably connected with that of the revolution which has destroyed it.

It is necessary for posterity to know what was the fate of the nation for near fourteen hundred years; it thus becomes essential to follow despotism through its long course; and the history of the French revolution must thus ascend to the first æra of the monarchy.

The most ancient states were those in 499, which Clovis assembled for the establishment of christianity; whatever related to the government was there discussed, but the great barons and the bishops alone were summoned to these states. The people, in which term we comprehend the immense majority of the nation, was reckoned as nothing. Clotaire II held a species of parliament, or moveable assemblies, sole master of the monarchy; after the civil wars which had taken place under the Children of Clovis, it was he that gave to the government that despotic character and disastrous tendency, which hastened the ruin of the first race. The usurper of the inheritance of his nephews, and the murderer of a queen at that time celebrated,* he beheld the increase of authority in the mayors of the palace, whom he had made his accomplices, and was obliged to suffer and grant every thing. The descendants of Clovis soon possessed but the shadow of royalty, and the people still enslaved, oppressed and degraded, suffered the yoke though under different masters. In these unhappy times, and under these ignominious reigns, man was debased, as well as the ground he trod upon. Such was the commencement of that feudal government, which we shall often have occasion to remark in the sequel. France had never any written constitution, a military democracy was transformed into an aristocracy; the kings drew from the people all authority to themselves, and the aristocracy was changed into absolute and arbitrary monarchy.

Charlemagne who eclipsed Pepin and Charles Martel, before whom the glory even of Louis XIV fades, showed himself worthy of the throne by restoring tranquility to his states, and enriching them with glory, justice, and happiness, notwithstanding his numberless wars. He gave almost wholly to the nation the legislative power, which is in fact the right and authority to compel men to be just, and to obey those laws which provide for their security, and protect their property. The people for the first time partook of this power, but did not as yet form a separate order of the state. The sons of Charlemagne were equally weak, cruel, and unjust. France was oppressed by them; and Charles the Bald, who succeeded them, gave the last blow to the authority

* Brunehaut.

of the government, for to extreme weakness he joined the most bare faced injustice, he was in fact a second Clotaire. The nobles raised themselves upon the wreck of the royal authority, and the nation was only the more to be pitied on that account. By new crimes the state was plunged into new misfortunes. At length the sceptre of Charlemagne escaped his descendant, and passed into the hands of Hugh Capet, one of the most powerful vassals of the crown; and the nation saw the change of the dynasty with as much indifference, as it beheld the sceptre ravished from the last branch of the first race: for being constantly trodden upon and disregarded, it was of little consequence whether it were enslaved by one master or another. The people, indeed, rather flattered themselves with hopes of benefit from a change, and wearied by frequent disappointment, at length abandoned themselves to despair.

The public spirit of the nation disappeared in the midst of such oppressions, followed by such deplorable weakness. The people were enslaved to customs no less barbarous than ridiculous, in proportion as their governors were more or less capricious, or more or less tyrannical. This is the kind of government which is called feudal. The states-general were varied according to the prevailing spirit of the age, and the reign, in which they were convoked. Under the first race the military composed them, and the church predominated under the second. Clovis consulted and governed the army, to which he owed his conquests; Pepin the priest-hood, to whom he was indebted for his usurpation, and Philip the handsome supported himself by a new prop in the parliaments.

A new order of things commenced under Hugh Capet, or rather the destruction of all public order. The nation became a prey to a band of feudal lords, who oppressed it in various manners; the weakness of these little despots attached them to those of higher authority; such was the origin of mesne fees and vassallage. Thus the people bore the weight of the different powers, Hugh Capet and his successors assembled the nation no longer: there were but two orders, the clergy and nobles.

Under Louis le Gros as we have before had occasion to remark, the government of municipal towns and boroughs was revived, the most paternal of all governments. The lords who in the time of the crusades had need of money for their voyages, sold certain privileges to their vassals; thus the crusades produced some liberty to the people. The reign of Philip the August is one of the principal epochs of the monarchy. France revived and re-ascended to the rank of a powerful state, a rank which she had lost from the time of Charlemagne. Louis IX, or St. Louis was still greater than his father Philip, he added power to wisdom and legislative justice: but it was not till the reign of Philip the handsome that the people formed an order of the state: it was under his reign, in 1314, that the imposts were granted by the three orders. The fiefs had by degrees become hereditary, nevertheless, Louis XI, Richelieu and Louis XIV, have proved that the power of the nobility may be restrained though not without difficulty and a long struggle. The government was nearly the same under Charles the wise; but the reign of Charles the sixth, whose insanity caused a long minority, plunged the nation into all those miseries which arise from the dissention of princes, the ambition of the great, and the incapacity of the sovereign.

The throne under Louis XI seemed the very nursery of crimes. Never was there a prince more weak and ferocious, more barbarous and superstitious. Never were a people more enslaved and debased than under that tyrant. The reign of François I

prepared, though distantly, the regeneration of the french, the States-general assembled at Tours, at length consecrated the trust of public liberty: they were the most memorable of any before those of 1789.

The deplorable reigns which followed that of François I, and even the latter years of Louis XIV, present us with a uniform spectacle of misery, produced by ambition and fanaticism. The civil wars had almost destroyed the kingdom till the reign of Henri IV; Sully applied a remedy to the wounds of the state; Richelieu followed him, and destroyed the power of the nobles—then commenced the age of Louis XIV.

Thus we have run over times of oppression, civil discord, desolation and carnage, during which the voice of the nation was not heard. Under Louis XIV, France was not less enslaved, but however it was quite another administration. Peace was never better preserved at home, nor war more vigorously pursued abroad; whilst commerce enriched the nation, and the arts attained a splendor of perfection which had never been equalled. But ministerial despotism had never risen to a greater height than during the last years of Louis XIV, and under his immediate successors.

From what we have related above, it is evident that the nation has been trampled upon and despised for near fourteen hundred years, and during the intervals of its greatest freedom it has scarcely been less oppressed. Thus if the people are charged with having abandoned their kings, they may reply, that for centuries they have been abandoned by them and their ministers. The reign of Henry the fourth could not strictly be called happy for the nation, for notwithstanding his good intentions, and the wisdom of the frugal Sully, he did not live long enough to see his paternal wishes realized: wishes thad tended to nothing less, to use his very expression, than that *every one of his subjects might put a fowl in his pot on sundays.* A sentiment of homely benevolence, which at the same time does honour to his heart, and advances his name above the glories of a Cæsar and an Alexander.

The event which makes the subject of this tablet, proves how dear to the people was the memory of Henry the fourth, for a wish so simple, and benevolent, though so ill accomplished. In a word, the result of all our reviews of the epochs of the french revolution is the same, its origin and excesses are only to be imputed to the imprudence of successive ministers.

Inscription under the plate.

ASSEMBLAGE OF THE PEOPLE ON THE PONT-NEUF.

September 16, 1788.

For many days the people assembled upon the Pont-neuf, and compelled the passengers to fall upon their knees, and salute the statue of Henry the fourth.

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Dessiné par Vény et Girardet. *Gravé par I. Espine et Cl. Niquet.*

ATTROUPEMENT AU FAUXBOURG S.T ANTOINE,

Le 28 Avril 1789.

On répandit le bruit dans ce fauxbourg que les Ouvriers de la Manufacture de Papiers Réveillon seroient taxés a 15.s par jour, et que le Pain étoit trop bon pour eux. Sous ce prétexte on forma un attroupement considérable qui se porta à cette Manufacture dont les meubles furent jettés par les fenêtres et incendiés.

HISTORICAL PICTURES

OF

THE EPOCHS

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

EIGHTH PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

RIOT IN THE FAUBOURG ANTOINE.

APRIL 28, 1789.

DESPOTISM is cœval with society itself, and the history of revolutions is but a narrative of the usurpations of power, the efforts of the oppressed, and the revenge of the strongest. In every nation upon earth vexations have produced resistance, and resistance gives birth to revolutions. In republics as in monarchies, the patience of the people has been exhausted by their oppressors; for to a certain point they never resist, but beyond that, they break from their restraint, and are as despotic in the use of their recovered power as their governors themselves. In all climates anarchy and disorder are the consequences of a struggle against oppression; but their duration is short, for either liberty is soon triumphant, or despotism regains its authority and commences its new course of crimes.

The revolution of which we propose to give the history, has been caused rather by the despotism of ministers than kings; and here we may observe that this is the most oppressive of all tyranny, because a minister may offend with more impunity than his master; what does a bad minister hazard? his place. The history of the ministers of France with the exception of Amboise, Suger, Sully, Colbert, Turgot, and perhaps Necker; presents an unvaried scene of compulsion, plunder, and intrigue; under such ministers nothing was seen but proscriptions and *lettres de cachets* of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter. Under the ministers of Louis XV the

government was weakened and degraded; the abbe Terray unable to procure money plundered it in the king's name; and it is impossible to express the odium with which his exactions loaded him. Under Louis XVI the dissipations and prodigalities of Calonne ruined the finances, and exhausted the wealth of the nation.

The accumulation of so many evils, and the magnitude of the abuse excited a general discontent, and lastly a general insurrection. Instead of prudently yielding to the storm and averting its effects by mild concessions, the ministers and the court did all in their power to exasperate the minds of the people, by a conduct more oppressive than ever. They had recourse to the means familiar with despotic governments; they resolved to oppose public opinion with the point of the bayonet, and to collect sufficient troops in Paris for the purpose of overawing the citizens. A pretext was soon found: it was resolved to stir up that immense body of workmen and day labourers who inhabited the faubourg Antoine and the faubourg Marceau; these people removed from all knowledge of public affairs, were most easy to seduce and mislead. For this purpose it was necessary to sacrifice an honest man, and to find a wretch who would undertake to accuse him; the abbé Roi seized with avidity the occasion of committing a useful crime. He had been secretary to the count d'Artois, and had abused the protection of M. de Charost who had recommended him to M. Reveillon, a worthy citizen of the faubourg Antoine, who employed at his paper manufactory a great number of workmen, to whom he was a father and benefactor.

This merchant had made considerable advances to the abbé Roi which had never been repaid. M. Reveillon wrote to M. de Charost to entreat his interference for the payment. M. de Charost sent his letter to the abbé, who cut off the signature and wrote above it an obligation for six thousand livres in his own favour. The enraged merchant threatened to prosecute the affair in a court of law. The abbé Roi took advantage of these circumstances to destroy him. On a sudden a report was spread that Reveillon had lowered the wages of his workmen fifteen sous a day; that he had declared bread was too good for them, and that he had been driven from his district for his inhumanity. Government had been informed that a multitude of the lowest orders of the people had for some days past entered the city without having any apparent business, but paid no attention to this information. The people did not take the trouble to examine the report, but deceived by the calumny, the inhabitants of the two faubourgs Marceau and Antoine collected together. A mob, none of whom had ever been seen before, whose persons were even unknown to the inspector of the police, burnt an image to which they gave the name of Reveillon, and condemned him to death under a pretended order of the Tiers-Etat.

M. Reveillon ran to implore the assistance of the lieutenant of police: the horse and foot watch were elsewhere employed. They referred him to the commander of the french guards, and after some difficulty M. Reveillon obtained an audience of him. He was promised instant succour, but they only sent a few soldiers, though any one of the battalions of the french guards who were then in Paris might instantly have quelled the disturbance. The rioters passed the night in the public houses, and seemed preparing by intoxication for the crimes of the next day. While the inspectors of the police slept, money was every where distributed to hire accomplices. They entered the house of Reveillon, from which he had fortunately escaped with his wife, where they pillaged and destroyed every thing. Many of the miserable wretches who had entered the cellars in searchof

wine and strong liquors, deservedly met their fate by swallowing draughts of nitrous acids, and drugs which were used in dying and colouring.

At length a body of the military appeared, and the mob supplied themselves with arms from every thing they could find. The french and Swiss guards sustained for a long time the blows and provocations of this mad multitude; at length a detachment of *Royal Cravate* received orders to fire. Their vengeance was dreadful; all who were on the roofs of the houses they shot; the people were pursued with the bayonet; the cavalry and infantry were now brought up, and the street lined with cannon. The mob was at length dispersed and many were delivered up to punishment. The people are always the instrument and the victim; Paris beheld with terror its liberty openly threatened by the military. The soldiers could scarcely be compelled to the services which were required of them, and the court unknown to iltelf concurred in uniting the very agents of its despotism to the common cause. This lesson is of importance to all governments and proves that the excesses of tyranny will deprive it of its stay and support, and leave it naked and defenceless in the hour of attack.

The government had before committed an error of the same kind. The dismission of M. Lamoignon had excited universal joy in Paris, and the young men of the city burnt that magistrate in effigy. None of the instruments of the court interrupted them, but a few brigands and mercenaries mixed in the mob. M. de Brienne minister of war and brother of the prime minister, arrived from Versailles at the moment when these youths were proceeding to fire his house; it was necessary to resist the multitude by an armed force, this was the only way to prevent the effusion of blood, and put a stop to the riot. But it was agreed that the shortest way would be to massacre the people without taking the trouble to apprehend any, or distinguish between the innocent and the guilty. It is thus that under arbitrary government, or rather during the influence of obstinate and ignorant ministers a sport is made of the lives of the citizens. The same events followed by the same imprudence took place on account of the joy the people manifested at the dismissal of M. de Brienne the principal minister.

Meantime the nation was in a general ferment, never more enslaved than at this period; she at length awoke to a true knowledge of her servitude, and made her first efforts to regain her freedom. During the long course of monarchy the people had scarcely respired one moment from oppression, and the progress of despotism was marked by an unvaried prodigality of the public treasure. At the commencement of the reign of Louis XVI, hopes were entertained that the government having passed from mixed to feudal, and from feudal to absolute, would at length assume the character of a popular and paternal monarchy. But the weakness of the king, the fatal influence of the queen, of the count d'Artois, and madame Polignac; together with the avidity of a crowd of courtiers; the folly of the ministers whose power was only to do evil, (for Turgot and Necker were not long retained in their places) in short the numerous obstacles which frustrated the plans of the best intentioned ministers, and finally the injudicious measures pursued by the government, plunged the nation into those convulsions of rage and indignation, which have caused such scenes of horror.

Such was the disposition of the public mind when government had the imprudence to render the evil worse by firing on the people, and taking such severe measures as we have just dessribed.

Numerous were the manly and generous writings which now appeared and which raised the public expectation to its height. They endeavoured to stop the torrent of light and effervescence; but the books seemed to spring out of the earth. These writings had a popular turn, and forced their way to readers of all descriptions; the government was obliged to permit the perfect freedom of the press. It was now that the public discontents were spread throughout France. The voice of liberty reached even the foot of the throne, and the general wishes of the nation were thus directed as to its objects to a government less oppressive than the one which existed.

The faction of Orleans took advantage of these circumstances, and received in its pay a band of profligate writers, who hastened the progress of the revolution, and gave it the most fatal direction. On them may be charged the miseries of France, and that profusion of blood which stains the early annals of the republic.

The ministers, the noblesse, the clergy, the parliaments expressed a contempt for the spirit of the nation. They were only employed in augmenting their prerogatives, and supporting their interest, and thus by their negligence concurred blindly to their own destruction. They had abandoned the people, and the people at length abandoned them. May this example long remain present to the minds both of sovereigns and their subjects! that the one may learn that power is ruined by its abuse, and the other be convinced that true liberty consists only in submission to the laws, and that licentiousness is worse than despotism.

Such is the true moral of the french revolution; such are the causes which produced, and the events which followed it.

RIOT IN THE FAUBOURG ANTOINE.

Feb. 28, 1789.

A report being spread in this faubourg, that the wages of the labourers of M. Reveillon's paper manufactory were to be lowered 15 sous a day, and that he had said Bread was too good for them, a mob collected in the faubourg, sacked his houses, and burnt the furniture in the courts.

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Duplessi Bertaux inv. & del. — l'An 6 de la Rep.e — Duplessi-Bertaux aqua fortiz.

J. S. BAILLY DÉPUTÉ AUX ÉTATS GÉNÉRAUX DE 1789.

et Maire de Paris, Jugé à mort le 12 Novembre 1793.

J. S. Bailly avoit de grands titres à la haine que nos tyrans révolutionnaires portoient aux hommes probes et éclairés, surtout lorsque ceux ci s'etoient déjà trouvés dans des circonstances où ils avoient pu faire éclater leur horreur pour toute espèce de tyrannie. Bailly, lors de la fameuse Séance au jeu de Paume, époque à laquelle il présidoit l'Assemblée Nationale, prouva tout ce qu'on devoit attendre de son attachement inflexible à ses devoirs. Etranger à toutes les intrigues, à toutes les factions, il sçut également pendant sa Mairie se renfermer dans les bornes de ses fonctions, et présenter au milieu des orages d'une grande révolution, dans le déchainement de toutes les passions, parmi la fureur de tous les partis, le spectacle d'un Magistrat Philosophe qui ne s'est jamais écarté de la ligne invariable du Beau, du Juste, et de l'Honnête, pour nous servir des expressions admirables de Cicéron, avec qui l'infortuné et célèbre Bailly eut tant de rapports. Comme Cicéron, il s'immortalisa par ses écrits, se dévoua pour sa Patrie, et fut immolé par des tyrans. L'Orateur, le Consul de Rome présenta avec la sérénité d'une ame pure, sa tête à ses assassins; Le brillant Auteur de l'Histoire de l'Astronomie marcha à l'échaffaud avec le calme d'un homme que la calomnie même n'a pu atteindre. Il épuisa la fureur de la populace dont il avoit été l'idole, et fut dans la suite regretté par ce même peuple qu'il avoit si bien servi, et qui n'avoit jamais cessé de l'estimer. L'homme de la révolution qui fut le plus heureux en honneurs, fut celui qui subit la plus douloureuse agonie.

Il mourut comme le Juste de Platon, au milieu de l'ignominie: on cracha sur lui, on brula un Drapeau sous sa figure, on l'insulta, on le couvrit de boue.

Ainsi périt un des premiers Philosophes, un des plus vertueux Magistrats, un des meilleurs Citoyens dont aucune nation ait pu s'honorer.

* Serment du jeu de Paume à Versailles, le 20 Juin 1789.

PORTRAIT I.

JEAN SYLVAIN BAILLY,

DEPUTY TO THE STATES-GENERAL 1789.

MAYOR OF PARIS,

Sentenced to death November 12 1793.

JEAN SYLVAIN BAILLY was well deserving the hatred which revolutionary tyrants bear to honest and enlightened men; and was distinguished above all those who, in all circumstances, make known their ahorrence of every species of tyranny. Bailly, at the celebrated sitting of the tennis-court, at which period he presided in the national assembly, proved to the eyes of the world that every thing should give way to the rigid performance of his duties. A stranger to all intrigues and factions, during the time of his mayoralty he confined himself to the legitimate functions of his office, and in the midst of the commotions of a great revolution, when passions had broken loose from all restaint, and party was opposed to party, he presented a character dignified and uncommon, that of a magistrate, a philsosopher, and a man, whose line of conduct was invariably just and honorable. Like Cicero he rendered himself immortal by his writings; like him too he devoted himself to his country, and was sacrficed by its tyrants. The orator, the consul of Rome, presented his head to the assassins with the calm serenity of a philopher: the brilliant author of the history of astronomy went to the scaffold with the composure of a man above being wounded by calumny. He appeased the fury of that populace of which he had so long been the idol, and he was in the end regretted by the same people whom he had so well served, as always to have been an object of their esteem. The most honorable founder of the revolution was he that underwent a death the most painful. He died like the *Good man of Plato*, overwhelmed with ignominious suffering. They burnt the red flag before his face; they insulted him; and covered him with dirt. Thus perished the first of philosophers, the most virtuous of magistrats, the best of citizens whom any nation had ever the lot to immortalize.

Inscription: Oath of the tennis-court, at Versailles June 20 1789.

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Le vacher dessp.



Duplessi-Bertaux inv. & del

1 An 6. de la Reput.

Duplessi-Bertaux aqua forti

GILBERT MOTTIER LAFAYETTE,

DÉPUTÉ D'AUVERGNE AUX ÉTATS GÉNÉRAUX DE 1789,

et Commandant de la Garde Nationale Parisienne.

L'homme qui, dès l'âge de 19 ans, avait embrassé la cause américaine avec tant de chaleur, et qui, par ses talens politiques et militaires, avait le plus contribué à fonder une république chez les Anglo-Américains, devait nécessairement trouver dans la révolution française une belle occasion de déployer son amour pour la gloire, et surtout pour la liberté. Lafayette, nommé, en 1787, à l'assemblée des notables, attaqua vigoureusement les abus et les dilapidations; il demanda l'abolition des lettres de cachet, la convocation d'une Assemblée nationale, et soutint constamment les intérêts du tiers-état. En juillet 1789, l'assemblée constituante se trouvant environnée de troupes, Lafayette appuya la motion de Mirabeau, pour leur éloignement. Il proposa, le 11 du même mois, la première déclaration des droits de l'homme qui ait été promulguée en Europe, et présida l'assemblée, en qualité de vice-président, dans la fameuse séance permanente, qui ne finit qu'après la prise de la Bastille, dont il fit publier la démolition le 16.

Ayant accepté la place de commandant général des gardes nationales Parisiennes, il organisa cette troupe, et en fit un corps formidable. Forcé, par le peuple, de marcher sur Versailles, il sauva la vie à la famille royale dans la nuit du 5 au 6 octobre. Ce fut lui qui, à la première fédération, en 1790, prononça, sur l'autel de la patrie, le serment civique, au nom de la nation armée.

Les travaux de l'assemblée constituante étant terminés, Lafayette rentra dans le rang de simple citoyen; mais il fut bientôt rappelé de sa retraite, pour commander une armée, où il eut à lutter à la fois contre les ennemis extérieurs et ceux du dedans. Mis hors la loi, pour avoir refusé de se soumettre à la révolution du 10 août, il essaya de gagner un pays neutre, après avoir pris toutes les précautions pour le salut des troupes et de la frontière; mais il tomba entre les mains des Autrichiens, qui le tinrent, pendant cinq ans, dans la plus dure captivité (*). Lafayette conserva, dans les fers, un caractère ferme et inébranlable. Il dut enfin sa liberté aux sollicitations de Bonaparte, et se retira près la république batave. Ce ne fut qu'à l'époque du 18 brumaire qu'il rentra en France, où il vit dans une tranquille et honorable retraite, qu'il s'est choisie, dans le département de Seine-et-Marne.

(*) *Il fut renfermé alternativement dans les forteresses de Wesel, Magdbourg, Neisse et Olmutz.*

* *Fédération générale au Champ de Mars, le 14 Juillet 1790.*

PORTRAIT II.

GILBERT MOTTHIER LAFAYETTE,

DEPUTY FROM AUVERGNE TO THE STATES-GENERAL 1789;

Commander of the National guard of Paris.

THE man who at the age of nineteen had embraced with such warmth the cause of the Americans; who by his military and civil talents, had contributed to establish the Trans-atlantic republic, must of necessity have found in the french revolution a fit occasion to promulgate his love of glory, and gratify his ardour for liberty. Lafayette, called in 1787 to the assembly of the notables, attacked with vigour the abuses of the government, demanded the abolition of the lettres-de-cachet, the convocation of the national assembly, and supported with stubborn firmness the interest of the *Tiers-Etat.* In July 1789, the constitutional assembly was surrounded by troops, and Lafayette seconded the motion of Mirabeau for removing them. He proposed on the 11th. of the same month the first declaration of the rights of man, and which was ordered to be published throughout all Europe. He presided at the assembly, as vice-president, in the famous continued sitting, which did not terminate till after the taking of the Bastille, which was demolished on the 16th. — Having accepted the office of commander-general of the national guard of Paris, he organised it, and made it a formidable corps; compelled by the people to march to Versailles, he saved the lives of the royal family on the night of the 5 and 6 of October. It was he who upon the first federation in 1790, pronounced, upon the altar of his country, the civic oath, in the name of an armed nation. The labours of the constitutional assembly being terminated, he returned to the rank of simple citizen, but he was soon recalled from his retreat to command an army where he had to contend as well against foreign as domestic enemies. Out-lawed, because he refused to submit to the revolution of the 10th. of August, he endeavoured to escape to a neutral country, after having taken every precaution for the safety of his troops and the frontiers; but he fell into the hands of the Austrians who reduced him, for five years, to the most severe captivity.* Lafayette, in his imprisonment, maintained a firm and inflexible character. He obtained his liberty at the request of Bonaparte, and retired to the Batavian republic. It was not until the epoch of the 18 Brumaire that he revisited France, where he obtained a tranquil and honourable retreat in the department of Leine and Marne.

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* He was confined alternately in the fortresses of Vesel, Mabourg, Neisse, and Olmutz.

Inscription: The general federation in the Champ-de-Mars, July 14 1790.

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Duplessis Berteaux inv.et del — L'An 6e de la Rép.e — Duplessis Berteaux aqua fortè.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS,

DÉPUTÉ DE PARIS A LA CONVENTION NATIONALE,

Jugé à mort le 6 Avril 1794.

Camille Desmoulins, auteur ingénieux et profond, nourri de la lecture de Tacite et de Suétone, écrivant avec une originalité piquante, et maniant avec légéreté l'arme tranchante du ridicule, avoit infiniment contribué à la révolution, par son journal intitulé Révolution de France et du Brabant. *C'étoit un démagogue fanatique: il avoit pris le titre de* Procureur général de la Lanterne, *titre qui eut mieux convenu à Marat ou à Hébert: car on peut dire que si Desmoulins déliroit en écrivant, si quelque fois il propageoit des dogmes insurrecteurs, sa méchanceté expiroit au bout de sa plume; et par une de ces contradictions que le cœur humain n'offre que trop souvent, et que le fanatisme d'une tête exaltée peut seul expliquer, on le voyoit dans ses écrits, appeler les poignards sur la tête des uns, tandis qu'il portoit à l'extrême l'indulgence pour les autres. Ses amis lui connoissoient un tel fond de bonhommie, de simplicité antique, et surtout d'humanité, qu'ils le nommèrent le* Lafontaine de la révolution. *Ce fut ce caractère d'humanité qui lui coûta la vie.*

On a prétendu qu'il s'étoit vendu à d'Orléans; mais il faut observer qu'on pensoit alors que la révolution ne pouvoit s'opérer que par un changement de Dynastie. Il a d'ailleurs bien fait oublier ses torts par le courage qu'il a eu de se dévouer à la mort, lorsqu'il osa le premier parler de clémence dans un nouveau journal intitulé le vieux Cordelier: *il mit à nud la tyrannie décemvirale; il proposa d'établir* un Comité de Clémence, *à une époque où la terreur avoit effacé ce mot de la langue française. Toutes les ames sensibles applaudirent à ses efforts généreux.*

Malgré que Robespierre eut fait ses études avec Desmoulins; quoique dans leur enfance, ils eussent été liés de la plus tendre amitié, ce monstre, non seulement abandonna son ancien ami, mais il fut le premier à ordonner son supplice.

Le malheureux Camille fut condamné comme conspirateur, par le tribunal de Fouquier-Tinville: ainsi périt l'homme généreux qui, le premier, au 12 juillet avoit arboré la Cocarde Nationale, et encore, qui, le premier, en 1794, osa démasquer la tyrannie aussi exécrable que monstrueuse, dont le poids énorme pesoit sur la France.

* *Motion de Camille Desmoulins au Palais Egalité.*

PORTRAIT III.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS,

DEPUTY FROM PARIS TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION,

Sentenced to death, April 6 1794.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS, a profound and ingenious writer, taught in the School of Tacitus and Suetonius, distinguished for the originality of his manner, and the dexterity of his ridicule, contributed greatly to the revolution by his Journal entitled *the Revolution of France and Brabant.* He was a fanatical demagogue, and assumed the title of Procurator-general *to the Lanterne*; a title which rather belonged to Marat or Hebert. Desmoulins might be called a mad-man in his writings, for when he had spread abroad his revolutionary dogmas, his wickedness was laid aside with his pen; and by one of those common contradictions in character which genius can alone atone for, in some of his writings he called for vengeance on the heads of many, and carried to an extreme his indulgence for others. His friends looked upon him as a man of genuine simplicity, and great humanity, and named him the *Lafontaine* of the revolution. But these virtues hastened his destruction.

They pretended that he was sold to Orleans, and that he supposed the revolution could not be carried on but by a change in the dynasty. We must forget his crimes in the courage with which he braved death, as he was the first to recommend clemency, in a new Journal entitled the *old Cordelier*, and by which he exposed himself to a worse than decemviral tyranny. It proposed the establishment of a committee of indulgence, at a time when terror had effaced that word from the french language: every man of humanity applauded those efforts of his generosity. Although Robespierre had from infancy been brought up with Desmoulins, although the closest friendship had long subsisted between them, that monster, not only deserted his ancient friend, but was the first to advise his punishment.

The unhappy Camille Desmoulins was condemned as a conspirator by the tribunal of Fouquier-Thinville: thus perished the man, who, on the 14 July, was the first that mounted the national cocade, and who was the first in 1794, to unmask that execrable and monstrous tyranny, which crushed and degraded France.

Inscription: Motion of Camille Desmoulins in the Palais-Royal.

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Le Vacher sculp.



Duplessi Bertaux inv. & del. — L'An 6 de la Rép.e — Duplessi-Bertaux aqua forti

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NÉKER MINISTRE D'ÉTAT

ET DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL DES FINANCES EN 1788,

Ministre d'Etat et premier ministre des finances en 1790.

L'histoire ministérielle ne nous présente, depuis le commencement de la monarchie, si l'on en excepte d'Amboise, Suger, Sulli, Turgot et Néker, qu'une affreuse combinaison de la force, du vol, et de l'intrigue. Dans les premières années du regne de Louis Seize, M. Turgot déploya dans le ministère des finances des vues utiles et de grands moiens; sa probité sévère et économique causa sa chûte.

M. Néker, connu par son habileté dans la banque, fut nommé directeur général des finances; annonçant un système nouveau, affectant un peu de stoïcisme, lié avec les écrivains alors les plus distingués, il eut des prôneurs enthousiastes et des détracteurs frénétiques: il n'auroit du avoir ni les uns, ni les autres. il étoit bien loin de posséder le génie de sa place, et celui des grandes circonstances où il se trouva; mais il jouissoit de la confiance publique: ce fut lui qui décida Louis Seize à convoquer les Etats Généraux.

M. Néker n'a jamais pu présenter à cette assemblée aucune de ces conceptions vastes, aucun de ces plans réparateurs que les circonstances lui commandoient. Il avoit un grand effet à produire; il jouissoit d'une popularité, d'une confiance générales, telles qu'aucun ministre n'en a jamais eu; mais il ne sçut pas faire mouvoir la puissance de ces leviers; il ne connut guères que la ressource ruineuse des emprunts.

Son renvoi d'une cour corrompue fait son plus grand éloge: il eut cela de commun avec M. Turgot. Le roi fut obligé de rappeller M. Néker: l'Assemblée Constituante joignit à la lettre du monarque une lettre non moins expressive. M. Néker revint triomphant, par une de ces inconstances de la fortune, ou plutôt de l'opinion publique, qu'on remarque trop souvent dans l'histoire; l'indifférence la plus profonde succéda bientôt à l'idolâtrie qu'il inspiroit alors. Il demanda sa retraite, et se retira, le 4.7.bre 1790, dans sa patrie (à Genève).

On peut dire de lui qu'il n'avoit mérité ni cet excès d'honneur, ni cet excès d'oubli.

* Bustes de MM. Néker et d'Orléans portés en triomphe et brûlés à la Place Louis XV. le 12 Juillet 1789.

PORTRAIT IV.

NECKER,

MINISTER OF STATE, AND DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF FINANCE IN 1788;

Minister of state, and first minister of Finance in 1790.

Should we present the history of ministers from the commencement of the monarchy, if we except d'Amboise, Sugerz, Sulli, Turgot and Necker, what will our annals exhibit but a frightthful combination of force, robbery and intrigue? In the first years of the reign of Louis XVI, Turgot discovered in the administration of the finances the most useful and noble projects; his probity and economy hastened hïs fall. M. Necker known by his ability as a banker, was appointed director-general of the finances, announcing a new system, and affecting a degree of stoicism, he connected himself with the most eminent writers of his age; he was equally the object of flattery and detraction, and merited neither; he was unequal to his place and the circumstances of the times; but possessed the public confidence. It was he who determined Louis to convoke the states.

M. Necker never presented to that assembly any of those grand projects, or plans of reform which the exigencies of the times demanded. A great effect was to be produced, and the minister possessed great powers; such as a degree of public confidence which had never before fallen to the lot of any one: but he knew not how to apply his levers; in a word, he knew nothing but the system of loans. His greatest praise is his dismission from court; he had this boast in common with Turgot; but the king was compelled to recall him, and the constituent assembly added to the letter of the king another not less expressive. Thus by one of those caprices of fortune, or rather of public opinion not unfrequent in history, Necker returned triumphant; but indifference soon succeeded the idolatry of the people; he demanded his dismission, Decembre 4 1790, and returned to Geneve. And it may be said of him that he as little merited their idolatry as their neglect.

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Duplessis Berteaux inv. et del. — l'An 6e. de la Rép.e — Duplessis Berteaux aqua fort.

HONORÉ GABRIEL RIQUETTI MIRABEAU,

DÉPUTÉ DE PROVENCE AUX ÉTATS GÉNÉRAUX DE 1789,

Mort le 2 Avril 1791.

Mirabeau était un de ces hommes extraordinaires faits pour influencer leur siecle et les générations futures, et pour exciter toutes les tempêtes de l'opinion publique, si les événemens concourent à les mettre à leur place. Lors de la convocation des Etats-Généraux, se voyant repoussé ignominieusement par l'ordre de la noblesse, assemblé à Aix, sa patrie, il tourna ses vues du côté des communes: les Privileges passeront, dit-il dès lors; mais le Peuple est immortel. A peine fut-il sur le théâtre des Etats-Généraux, que la popularité devint colossale; elle s'accrut surtout par la fermeté avec laquelle il répondit au maître des cérémonies, le marquis de Brezé, lors qu'à la suite de la fameuse séance royale du 23 juin 1789, il vint intimer aux députés l'ordre de se retirer: Esclave, dis à ton maître que nous sommes ici par le vœu du peuple, et que nous n'en sortirons que par la force des bayonettes. *Une santé robuste, un geste imposant, une voix sonore et retentissante, une grande audace, beaucoup de savoir, et l'art si rare d'improviser, le faisaient dominer sur l'assemblée nationale de toute la hauteur du génie et de l'éloquence. Il ébranla toutes les imaginations, donna une impulsion généreuse à tous les esprits, et opposa à un autre Phillipe un nouveau Démosthène.*

La mort vint le surprendre au milieu de sa gloire; et l'homme de la liberté publique, solennellement regretté, reçut des honneurs funèbres inconnus jusqu'alors; mais dans le bouillonnement des partis qui se formèrent depuis, des hommes vils, dont la basse envie égalait la médiocrité, l'accusèrent d'un pacte impie avec la cour qu'il avait foudroyée, de trahison envers la france qu'il avait servie; et l'ingratitude foulant bientôt sa tombe, dispersa ses cendres sans pouvoir dévorer sa renommée. Le lustre qui l'environne est devenu le domaine des nations et de la postérité: ce sont elles qui le jugeront avec cette impartialité qu'un grand homme ne doit jamais attendre de ses contemporains. La mémoire de Bâcon fut aussi calomniée; mais de jour en jour elle s'aggrandit et s'épure; et l'orgueil national, supérieur à tous les partis, écarte maintenant les allégations vagues dont on chercherait encore à flétrir un si grand nom.

* Reponse énergique de Mirabeau au maitre des Cérémonies.

PORTRAIT V.

HONORÉ GABRIEL RIQUETTI MIRABEAU,

DEPUTY FROM PROVENCE TO THE STATES-GENERAL 1789,

Died, April 2 1791.

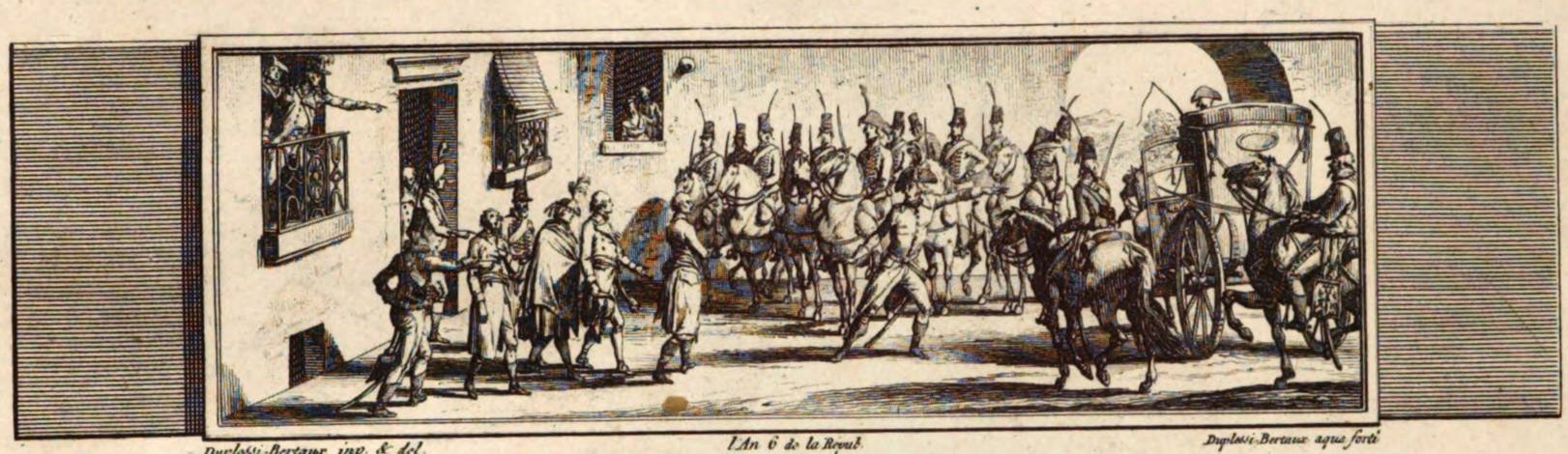
MIRABEAU was one of those extraordinary men born to influence the age in which he lived, and the generations which were to succeed him; he was adapted equally to raise the storm of public opinion, and, when events concurred, to direct its operation. Before the convocation of the States-general, seeing himself ignominiously repulsed from the order of the noblesse, assembled at Aix his native province, he attached himself wholly to the side of the commons. Scarcely did the States-general appear upon the stage, when the popularity of Mirabeau was unbounded, and which he owed to the firm answer he gave to the master of the ceremonies, the marquis de Breze, when at the end of the 23 June, he intimated to the deputies the royal order to depart, « *Slave, said he, tell thy master, we are here by the voice of the people, and it is only at the point of the bayonet we can be driven hence.* » A robust health, a manly address, a sonorous voice, great audacity, much knowledge, and the art of speaking promptly, gave him all the predominance of genius over the national assembly. He dazzled every imagination, gave a generous impulse to every mind, and was another Demosthenes against another Philip.

Death surprised him in the midst of his glory, and the man of the people received funeral honours hitherto unknown. In the rage of subsequent parties he was accused of having formed a secret connection with the court; and ingratitude pursuing him to the tomb dispersed his ashes, without affecting his well-earned fame. The splendor which surrounds him will long remain with posterity. Future ages only will be able to judge him with that impartiality which so great a character expects from his cotemporaries. It is thus that the memory of Bacon has been calumniated, and it is thus that it has become daily more pure. National pride, superior to all prejudice of party, only employs itself at present in removing those aspersions, with which the envy of cotemporaries blackens the most eminent of men.

Inscription: Energetic answer of Mirabeau to the master of the ceremonies.

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Duplessi-Bertaux inv. & del. — l'An 6 de la Repub. — Duplessi-Bertaux aqua forti

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DUMOURIEZ, MINISTRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES,

PUIS MINISTRE DE LA GUERRE,

enfin Général des Armées françaises dans le Nord en 1792 et 1793.

Dumouriez ne fut jamais ni franc Royaliste, ni franc Républicain. C'étoit un de ces hommes d'un esprit inquiet et turbulent, qui cherchent à faire du bruit à quelque prix, et par quelque voie que ce soit, et qui sont toujours prêts à tout sacrifier à leur ambition. Attaché depuis longtems au parti d'Orléans, on l'avoit vu soulever la Normandie pour ce même parti, et y persécuter le Duc d'Harcourt et le Marquis de Beuvron, ses bienfaiteurs. Ses intrigues le conduisirent successivement, au mois de février 1792, au ministère des affaires étrangères, et trois mois après, à celui de la guerre. Entré aux jacobins, il arbora le bonnet rouge *qu'il portoit pendant son ministère même, en présence de Louis XVI. Lorsqu'il eut gagné la Bataille de Gemmappe, il prodigua tant d'éloges au fils du Duc d'Orléans, qu'il étoit aisé de voir qu'il vouloit le présenter à la france comme un nouveau Germanicus. Après cette brillante victoire, Dumouriez marcha en conquérant vers le Brabant et la Belgique; mais la journée de Nerwinde fut le terme de ses succès. ce fut après cette défaite qu'il conçut et exécuta l'idée de trahir sa patrie en faveur des Autrichiens. Il traita secrettement avec le Prince de Cobourg, le 22 mars 1793. Cependant un décret de la Convention, du 30 mars, mandoit Dumouriez à la barre, pour rendre compte de sa conduite. Les députés* Camus, Lamarque, Quinette *et* Bancal, *ainsi que le Ministre de la guerre* Beurnonville, *furent chargés de ce rendre à l'Armée du Nord pour mettre le décret à exécution. Dumouriez les livra à l'ennemi; il eut ensuite une nouvelle conférence avec les Généraux de l'Empereur, et leur promit* Lille et Valenciennes. *Son armée l'ayant abandonné, il fut réduit à chercher un azile chez les Impériaux. Mais l'officier isolé qui venoit de se signaler par une perfidie sans succès, ne pouvoit être regardé que comme un être aussi vil que dangereux.*

Dumouriez, condamné à une obscurité désespérante pour un ambitieux, a publié depuis des mémoires où il se donne pour un grand partisan de Louis XVI, de même qu'il se disoit autrefois républicain; mais quelque masque qu'il ait pris, il n'a pu inspirer aucun intérêt; et loin d'obtenir même une certaine célébrité, il a pour ainsi dire, survécu à lui même par le profond oubli dans lequel il est tombé.

* *Dumouriez fait arrêter les commissaires envoyés vers lui par la Convention Nationale.*

PORTRAIT VI.

DUMOURIER,

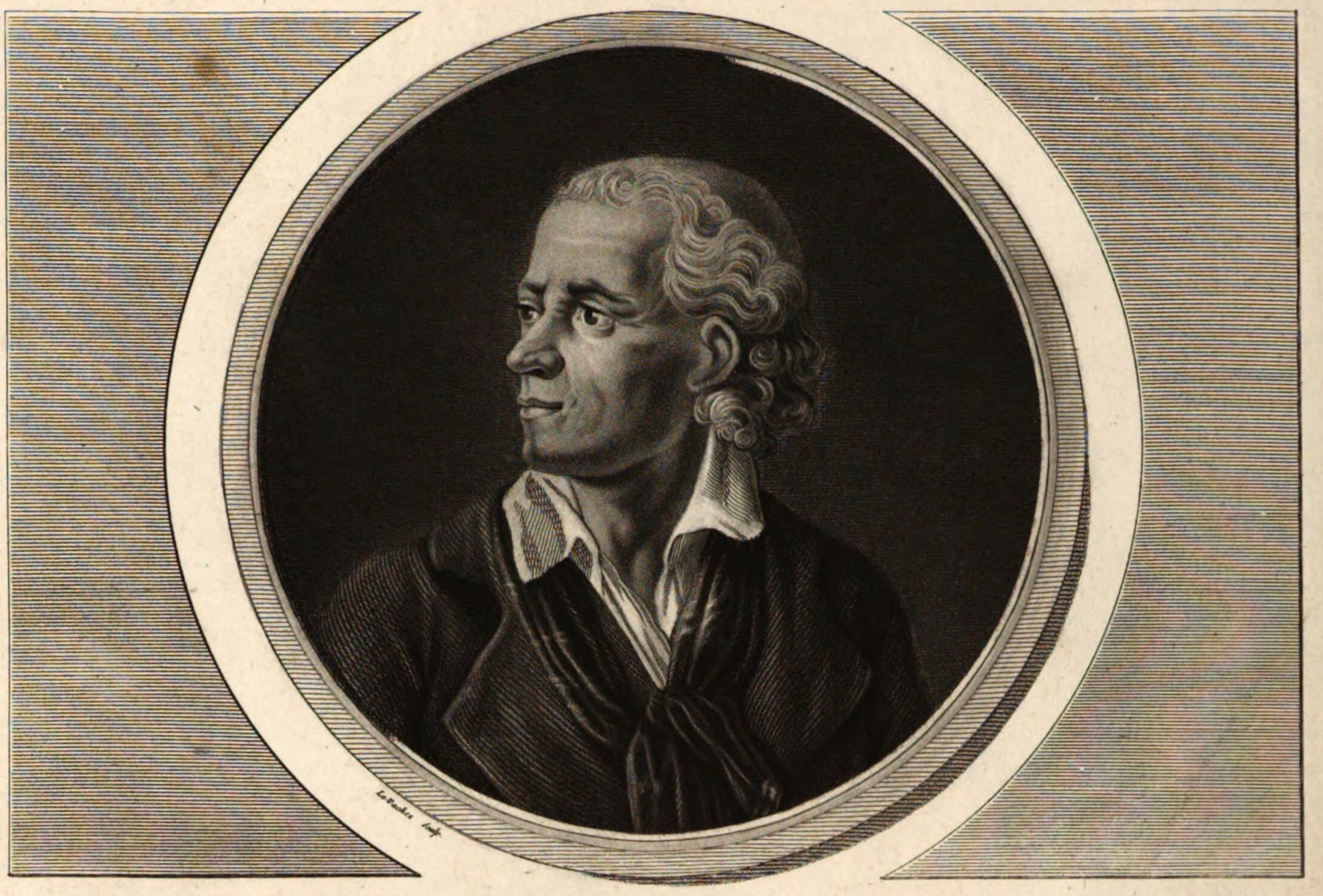
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AFTERWARDS MINISTER OF WAR,

And lastly, General of the french armies in the North, in 1792 *and* 1793.

DUMOURIER was neither an open royalist, nor an open republican; he was one of those tumultuous and enterprising spirits who would make themselves conspicuous by any means, and who are prepared to sacrifice every thing to their ambition. Attached, for some time, to the party of Orleans, he had stirred up Normandy to insurrection for them, and had persecuted there the duke d'Harcourt, and the marquis de Beuvron his benefactors. His intrigues successively paved his way, in the month of February 1792, to the department of foreign affairs, and three months afterwards to the war-department. Enlisted with the jacobins, he mounted the *bonnet rouge*, which he wore during his own administration, and even in the presence of Louis XVI. After he had gained the battle of Gemappe, he pronounced such an Eulogium over the sons of the duke d'Orleans that it seemed as if he were presenting to France another Germanicus. After his brilliant victory, Dumourier marched conqueror towards Brabant and Belgium. But the day of Nerwinde was the limit of his success. It was after that defeat, that he conceived the design of betraying his country to the Austrians, and made a secret treaty with the Prince of Cobourg, March 22 1792, when a decree of the convention of the 30th. demanded him to present himself before the bar, to account for his conduct. The deputies Camus, Lamarque, Quinette, and Bancal, with the minister of war Beurnonville, were charged to proceed to the army of the north, to put the decree in execution. Dumourier delivered them over to the enemy, — had afterwards a new conference with the Generals of the Emperor, and promised them Lille and Valenciennes. His army abandoning him, he was compelled to take refuge with the Imperialists; but the officer who expected to signalize himself by the perfidious design, was taught that he would every where be regarded as dangerous and unsafe to trust.

Dumourier, condemned to an obscurity, intolerable for an ambitious man, has published some memoirs, in which he represents himself as the great partisan of Louis XVI, and in the same manner as he formerly declared himself a republican; but this mask which he took was only to court favour; and far from obtaining him celebrity, will never again raise him from the deep oblivion in which he has so long been buried.

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Le Mire sculp.



Duplessi Bertaux inv. & del. *An 6 de la Regnb.* *Duplessi-Bertaux aqua forti*

CHALIER PROCUREUR DE LA COMMUNE À LYON,

Condamné à mort le 29 Mai 1793.

Un des grands projets de nos tyrans révolutionnaires pour affermir leur puissance, étoit d'établir une jacobinière à Lyon, semblable à celle de Paris, sous le règne de Robespierre et Marat. Tandis que les jacobins répandoient dans le nord des principes sanguinaires, Lyon auroit propagé les mêmes maximes dans le midi. Après les massacres des 2 et 3 Septembre, les auteurs de cette horrible boucherie envoyerent dans cette ville plusieurs propagandistes, à la tête desquels étoit Châlier, piémontais de naissance, disciple bien digne de tels maîtres. Il commença l'exercice de sa mission par l'égorgement de cinq prisonniers incarcérés précédemment pour de simples faits de police correctionnelle. Il ouvrit ensuite, sous le titre de Club central, une assemblée soi-disant populaire. Le 6 février 1793, il proposa à cette assemblée, composée d'environ six cents individus, de s'emparer de l'artillerie, et de se saisir de tous les riches Lyonnais. Le prétexte qu'il avoit mis en avant étoit la découverte d'une prétendue conspiration. Tous les détenus devoient être décapités, et leurs corps jettés dans le Rhône. Le défaut de secret fit échouer cet exécrable projet, et le club fut dispersé. Mais le comité de salut public ayant envoyé à Lyon une partie de l'armée révolutionnaire de Paris, on rétablit le club central; la Municipalité fut renouvellée, et Châlier se fit nommer procureur de la commune. Il y avoit alors dans Lyon deux forces qui se choquoient, celle du club et de la Municipalité d'un côté, celle des Sections de l'autre. Un de ces deux partis vouloit piller et égorger, l'autre vouloit défendre sa vie et ses propriétés. On apprit, le 29 mai, que, par ordre de la Municipalité, de concert avec le club, plus de cent peres de famille avoient été jettés dans les fers pendant la nuit, et qu'ils devoient être mis à mort le jour même. Les Sections s'emparérent de l'Arsenal et des armes. Le combat s'engagea, et se soutint des deux côtés avec un égal acharnement; mais enfin les Sections eurent le dessus. Châlier fut mis en jugement, et condamné à mort par le tribunal du Département, après l'instruction la plus réguliere. Ainsi finit ce monstre qu'on ne peut bien caractériser, qu'en l'appellant le Marat de Lyon; et pour qu'il ne lui manquât aucune ressemblance avec l'autre Marat, il eut, comme lui, après le bombardement de cette ville infortunée, les honneurs de l'Apothéose.*

* *il présida cette assemblée le sabre au côté, ayant un pistolet à chaque main.*

* *Châlier préside l'Assemblée populaire de Lyon, et désigne 1200 individus de cette Commune, qu'on doit arrêter pendant la nuit.*

PORTRAIT VII.

CHALIER,

ADVOCATE OF THE COMMUNE OF LYONS;

Condemned to death, May 29, 1793.

One of the great projects of the revolutionary tyrants, in order to strengthen their party, was to establish a jacobin club at Lyons, like that of Paris, under the reign of Robespierre and Marat. At the same time in which the sanguinary principles of jacobinism were spreading in the North, Lyons had propagated the same maxims in the south. After the massacre of the 2 and 3 September, the authors of that horrible butchery sent to that city many of their agents, at the head of whom was Chalier, by birth a Piemontese, a diciple well worthy of such masters. He commenced the exercise of his mission by cutting the throats of five prisoners, who were committed for slight misdemeanours. He instituted a popular assembly under the name of the *Central-Club*. February 6 1793,* he proposed to that assembly, consisting of about 600 members, that they should seize the artillery, and pillage the town. His pretence was the discovery of a conspiracy. All the prisoners were beheaded, and their bodies thrown into the Rhone. Their want of secrecy defeated their project, and the club was dispersed. The committee of public safety had dispached to Lyons a part of the revolutionary army of Paris; which re-established the Central-Club: the munipality was restored, and Chalier was appointed advocate of the commune. There were in Lyons two contending parties, that of the club and the municipality on one side, and the sections on the other. One of these parties was intent only to rob and murder, the other to defend their lives and properties. They learnt, May 29, that, by order of the municipality, in concert with the club, more than a hundred fathers of families had been thrown into chains during the night, and were to be put to death on the next day. The sections seized the arsenals and the arms; the combat commenced, and was supported on both sides with equal obstinacy; but the sections prevailed. Chalier was brought to trial, and condemned to death by the tribunal of the department, after a regular trial. Thus terminated the life of a monster, who cannot be better described than by the term of the *Marat of Lyons*. And that the resemblance might be completer, like the other Marat, after the bombardment of that unfortunate city, he was honoured with an *apotheosis*.

* He presided at that assembly with a sword by his side, and a pistol in each hand.

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Duplessis-Bertaux inv. & del. *An. 6e de la Rép.* *Duplessis-Bertaux aqua forti*

JEAN PAUL MARAT,

DÉPUTÉ DE PARIS A LA CONVENTION NATIONALE,

Assassiné le 14 Juillet 1793.

Marat! quel nom, quel homme... ou plutôt quel monstre! que d'affligeans souvenirs rappelle cet être féroce, vomi comme une écume malfaisante, par le volcan de la révolution, et que la démence ou la fureur pouvoient seules tirer de l'obscurité à la quelle la nature l'avoit condamné. Mais puisque les pages de l'histoire doivent être souillées du nom de Marat, nous devons tracer le portrait de ce phénomène du crime. C'étoit un homme qui n'avoit pas cinq pieds de haut; il joignoit, aux formes extérieures les plus hideuses, les inclinations les plus basses et les plus crapuleuses, l'astuce d'un intrigant, l'imagination exaltée d'un frénétique, et l'ame vile d'un scélérat. Né dans le Comté de Neufchatel en Suisse, il vint à Paris pour subvenir à son indigence. Il faisoit le métier de charlatan. La faction Orléaniste avoit besoin d'un être de cette espèce. Marat étoit à vendre; on l'acheta. Ceux qui ont lu son journal sanguinaire intitulé l'Ami du peuple, *savent qu'il n'empruntoit quelque chaleur, que des idées atroces qu'il y répandoit, en disant tantôt qu'il* falloit abattre deux cents mille têtes, *tantôt qu'il falloit un Dictateur. Il fut le propagateur de ces boucheries d'hommes, qu'on a vu s'ouvrir dans la plupart de nos villes. Il présida aux massacres des 2 et 3 septembre 1792. La Convention l'avoit décreté d'accusation; mais il fut acquitté par le tribunal révolutionaire, et ramené en triomphe par ses satellites, au sein de l'Assemblée Nationale; il étoit presqu'étouffé sous le poids des couronnes civiques. Sa vengeance organisa la malheureuse journée du 31 mai. Qui sait jusqu'où se seroit portée la soif du sang dont il étoit dévoré? mais une héroïne (Charlotte Corday) délivra la terre de ce monstre, en le poignardant dans son bain le 14 juillet 1793.*

On lui décerna les honneurs de l'apothéose. Mais enfin sa gloire usurpée disparut, quand l'opinion des hommes de bien eut repris le dessus. Ses images, son tombeau, ses trophées devinrent l'objet de l'horreur et de l'exécration générales. Un décret avoit fait transporter son corps au Panthéon; un autre décret l'en chassa; et ses restes gangrénés de pourriture furent jettés dans l'égoût Montmartre.

* *Marat porté en triomphe, après avoir été acquitté par le Tribunal Révolutionnaire.*

PORTRAIT VIII.

JEAN PAUL MARAT,

DEPUTY OF PARIS TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION,

Assassinated, July 14 1793.

MARAT, what a name, what a man, or rather what a monster! How many afflicting images does his ferocity recall! He was only drawn from his native obscurity by the commotion of the revolution, and crimes hitherto esteemed beyond the reach of human depravity. But since history is compelled to sully its page with the name of Marat, it is necessary to exhibit the portrait of this prodigy of wickedness. He was not five feet in stature, and joined to a form the most hideous, passions the most base and ungovernable. He had the cunning of an intriguer, the imagination of a madman, and a soul only suited to the lowest of criminals. Born in the county of Neufchatel in Switzerland, he came to Paris to provide for his indigence, and turned Mountebank. The faction of Orléans needed one of this kind. Marat had his price, and it was paid him. Those who have read his sanguinary journal, *The friend of the People*, need not be told the character of a man who could at one time call for two hundred thousand heads, and at another for a dictator. He was the cause of those inhuman butcheries which were to be seen in every part of our cities. He presided at the massacre of the 2, and 3 of Sep^{r} 1792. The convention had decreed his accusation, but he was acquitted by the revolutionary tribunal, and brought back in triumph by his satellites to the bosom of the national Convention. He was almost sinking under the weight of civic crowns. His vengeance organized the proceedings of the 31 May. And it is impossible to say how far his thirst of blood would have carried him; but a heroine (Charlotte Corday) delivered the earth of this monster, by stabbing him with a poignard while in his bath, July 14 1793.

He was decreed the honour of an apotheosis,* but this usurped glory disappeared; for when the opinions of good men again prevailed, his statues, his tomb, his trophies became the objects of horror and execration. A decree gave his body the honours of the pantheon; another decree removed it thence; and his putrid remains were thrown into the common sewer in Montmartre.

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* Marat was publickly deified, in a festival given to his manes in the Luxembourg gardens. One of his high-priests on the occasion compared him to Jesus Christ, and exclaimed in these Words: O heart of Jesus! O heart of Marat! Jesus was a prophet, Marat was a God. The abominable discourse was printed!

Inscription: Marat brought in triumph after having been acquitted by the revolutionary tribunal.

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Le Vasseur Sculp.



Duplessi-Bertaux inv. & del. An 6e de la Repe Duplessi-Bertaux aqua forti

MARIE ANNE CHARLOTTE CORDAY D'ARMANS,

NATIVE DE LA PAROISSE DE S.T SATURNIN DES LIGNERETS,

Département du Calvados, Jugée le 17 Juillet 1793.

Charlotte-Corday étoit née avec une ame sensible, vive, et capable d'une détermination forte et soutenue; elle avoit reçu une éducation soignée, et conforme à sa naissance. Nourrie de la lecture des Philosophes anciens et modernes, son goût pour l'indépendance avoit été jusqu'à refuser plusieurs fois l'hommage de ses adorateurs. Autant son ame grande et généreuse s'affectoit en faveur du malheur, autant l'injustice la soulevoit et l'irritoit. Regardant Marat comme le principal auteur des forfaits révolutionnaires dont la France avoit à gémir, elle conçut le dessein de le poignarder. Elle partit de Caen le 9 Juillet 1793. Arrivée à Paris, elle écrit à Marat qu'elle a à lui révéler des secrets importans pour le salut de la République. Au moment où il la reçut chez lui, il étoit dans son bain; il lui demanda le nom des Députés proscrits le 31 mai, qui se trouvoient alors à Caen. Pendant qu'il les inscrivoit sur ses tablettes, elle tira un couteau de son sein, et le plongea tout entier dans le cœur de Marat.

Elle fut arrêtée sur le champ, et conduite à l'Abbaye. Un décret de la Convention la fit transférer à la Conciergerie. Elle comparut devant ses juges; il y avoit un concours prodigieux de spectateurs. Elle soutint son interrogatoire avec le plus grand calme, la plus grande présence d'esprit.

S'étant aperçue qu'un des auditeurs étoit occuppé à la dessiner, elle se tourna de son côté; lorsqu'on prononça sa condamnation, elle ne parut émue, ni de l'arrêt terrible qui la dévouoit à la mort, ni du silence glaçant qui l'environnoit. La plus profonde sérénité ne cessa de regner sur son front.

Vers les sept heures et demie du soir, on la vit paroître sur la charrette funéraire avec le même calme, la même impassibilité; sa tête étoit haute sans fierté, ses regards libres sans dédain, ses traits expressifs et animés sans fureur. Sa mémoire passera à la postérité, comme celle de tous les grands coupables; car, on ne peut pardonner l'assassinat, même celui de Marat.

* *Elle étoit fille de Jacques-François Corday d'Armans, ex-noble, habitant de Caen; elle avoit 25 ans.*

* *Charlotte Corday assassinant Marat dans son bain.*

PORTRAIT IX.

MARIE ANNE CHARLOTTE CORDAY D'ARMANS,

NATIVE OF THE PARISH OF S^{T}. SATURNIN OF LIGNERETS,

In the Department of Calvados, sentenced July 17 1793.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY had a soul of sensibility, of quick passion, and capable of a manly determination. She had received an education suitable to her birth *. Formed by the writings of ancient and modern philosophers, such was her ardour for freedom and independance, that she would not even subject herself to her lovers, but resolutely refused their homage. Her great and generous soul was no less affected by the misfortunes of the unhappy, than roused and irritated by a sense of injustice. Looking upon Marat as the principal author of the revolutionary crimes under which her country groaned, she conceived the design of assassinating him; and departed from Caen, July 19 1793. She arrived at Paris, and wrote to Marat that she was desirous of revealing to him secrets which concerned the safety of the republic. At the time he received her he was in his bath. He demanded of her the names of the deputies proscribed on the 31 May, who were at Caen. Whilst he wrote their names in his tablets, she drew à knife from her bosom, and plunged it in the heart of Marat. She was arrested, and conducted to the *Abbaye*. A decree of the convention removed her to the *Conciergerie*. She appeared before her judges in the presence of a multitude of spectators. She answered their interrogations with the greatest calmness and presence of mind. Perceiving that one of the auditors was employed in taking her portrait, she turned aside. While sentence was pronouncing she was unmoved, nor did the terrific decree which devoted her to death, nor the dead silence which prevailed throughout the court, disturb that profound serenity which reigned in her countenance. About half past seven in the same evening she appeared in the cart, which was to convey her to execution, with the same calmness, and intrepidity. Her manner was majestic without haughtiness, her looks free without disdain, her features expressive and animated without fierceness. Her name will be delivered down to posterity as one of those who have been *greatly criminal*, for even the assassination of a Marat cannot be pardoned.

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* She was 25 years of age, the daughter of Jacques Francis Corday d'Armans, a noble inhabitant of Caen.

Inscription under the portrait : Charlotte Corday assassinating Marat in his bath.

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Duplessi Bertaux inv. & del. An 6. de la Repub. Duplessi Bertaux aqua fortè

CARITAT DE CONDORCET

DÉPUTÉ A LA CONVENTION NATIONALE,

Mort le 28 mars 1794.

Rien ne fatigue plus le crime que la vue de l'homme vertueux; rien n'épouvante plus les tyrans que l'existence d'un philosophe dont l'esprit d'indépendance forme essentiellement le caractère. Plus on a l'ame élevée, moins on est porté à fléchir sous la tyrannie. C'est à ces titres que Condorcet s'étoit attiré la haine que lui portoit Robespierre. Mais le dictateur avoit encore d'autres motifs pour proscrire cet homme célèbre: ce dernier avoit été chargé de présenter un projet de Constitution: ce travail étoit tellement opposé aux desseins de nos tyrans révolutionnaires, que s'il avoit été adopté, nous n'eussions jamais été en proie aux longues calamités dont nous avons eu tant à gémir.

Condorcet fut mis au nombre des premiers députés proscrits après le 31 mai: on le comprit dans l'acte d'accusation qui fut porté contre Rabaut, Brissot, Vergniaud, Fauchet &c. *Les témoins à charge étoient presque tous des chefs de la municipalité de Paris, à la fois conspiratrice et accusatrice. Mais la défense des accusés détruisit complettement toutes les inculpations. Le président du tribunal, voyant se manifester des sentiments de justice, écrivit à la Convention, que si elle laissoit prolonger l'instruction du procès, les formalités de la loi le jetteroient dans un grand embarras. C'étoit demander une autorisation pour égorger ses victimes. Cette lettre étoit escortée d'une députation de jacobins. Le décret qui autorisa le juri à cesser l'instruction du procès, dès qu'il se croiroit assés instruit, fut un arrêt de mort. Les jurés votèrent froidement celle des députés les plus distingués par leurs talens, et la plupart aussi par leurs vertus.*

Condorcet n'avoit point été arrêté. Mais on découvrit enfin son azile, et on l'arrêta. ce fut alors qu'il prit, dans sa prison, du poison dont il s'étoit muni. Ainsi périt un littérateur, un savant, qui, sous ces deux titres, n'avoit d'autre égal dans l'Europe, que l'infortuné Bailly.

* *Condorcet se donnant la mort dans sa prison.*



PORTRAIT X.

CARITAT DE CONDORCET,

DEPUTY TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION,

Died March 28 1794.

No sight is more offensive to the wicked than that of a good man; nothing is more dreaded by tyrants than the existence of a philosopher, the character of whose mind is a virtuous independance. The more exalted the soul, the more resolutely does it spurn against tyranny. It was on this account that Condorcet became hateful to Robespierre. But the dictator had other motives for proscribing so illustrious a man: the latter was charged with presenting a project for a constitution; this was in opposition to the designs of the revolutionary tyrants, which, had it been adopted, would have saved us from those heavy calamities that fell upon France. Condorcet was in the number of the first deputies proscribed after the 31 May. He was comprehended in the act of accusation which was carried against Rabaut, Brissot, Vergniaud, Fauchet, etc. etc. The witnesses to the charge were almost all the chiefs of the municipality of Paris, at a time full of conspiracy and accusation. But the defence of the accused removed completely every charge. The president of the tribunal, seeing that sentiments of justice prevailed, wrote to the convention, that if the instructions for the process against them were suffered to be lengthened, the law would throw great embarrassments in their way. This was to demand an order for cutting the throats of his victims. This letter was accompanied by a deputation of Jacobins. The decree which authorized the jury to put an end to the instructions for the process, on the plea that they were sufficiently instructed, was in fact a sentence of death. The jury, without further formalities, voted condemnation of the deputies most distinguished by their talents and virtue.

Condorcet had made his escape; but they discovered his asylum and arrested him. He had furnished himself, however, with poison, and which he took in the prison where he was confined. Thus perished an author, and a scholar, who, in both respects had not his equal in Europe, if we except the unfortunate Bailly.

Inscription: The death of Condorcet in prison.

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Duplessi-Bertaux inv. & del. — l'An 6 de la Régt. — Duplessi-Bertaux aqua forti

MAXIMILIEN ROBESPIERRE DÉPUTÉ D'ARTOIS

AUX ÉTATS GÉNÉRAUX DE 1789, ET DÉPUTÉ DE PARIS A LA CONVENT.ON N.ALE

Exécuté le 10 Thermidor, l'an 2 (27 Juillet 1794)

En traçant le portrait du plus exécrable tyran qui ait jamais pesé sur la terre, notre cœur se resserre, et la plume est prête a échapper de nos mains. Il faut cependant le peindre à la posterité, cet homme qui a exterminé une partie de la francé, et qui, s'il eut vécu plus longtems, l'eut fait périr toute entière. Robespierre étoit natif d'Arras. Avocat médiocre, il paroint par ses intrigues à se faire nommer Député aux Etats Généraux de 1789. Dès le moment de son installation il parut se dévouer entierement à la cause du peuple, qu'il devoit un jour égorger avec tant de cruauté; le patriotisme qu'il affecta sans interruption jusqu'à la clôture de l'Assemblée Constituante, le fit surnommer Incorruptible.

Appelé de nouveau à la Convention nationale, par le département de Paris, Maximilien s'attacha à D'orléans, et lui voua une amitié sans bornes; mais quand ce dernier se fut ruiné à grossir son parti, il l'abandonna, et conçut l'idée de s'élever au Dictatoriat. Une hypocrisie profonde l'y fit parvenir; une terreur générale l'y maintint. L'activité dévorante de la foudre peut seule donner une idée de l'abus qu'il fit de sa puissance. La france ne fut plus qu'une vaste bastille. Les Guillotines ne pouvoient suffire au nombre des victimes: on eut recours aux fusillades, *aux* Noïades, *aux* Mitraillades, *termes aussi nouveaux que les forfaits qu'ils désignoient. Ivre de sa toute-puissance, ivre de l'encens populaire, il voulut être a la fois souverain Pontife et Dictateur, il osa dans la* fête à l'Etre suprême, *à la quelle il présidoit,* lever vers l'auteur de la nature ses mains teintes du sang de ses concitoyens; mais Dieu rejetta cet exécrable hommage. La chûte du tyran suivit de près l'excès de tant d'audace. Il fut décreté d'arrestation, à l'époque même qu'il avoit choisie pour se faire proclamer Dictateur.*

S'étant refugié au sein de la commune conspiratrice, il fut mis hors la loi, arrêté, et conduit à l'échaffaud, après avoir tenté vainement de se tuer d'un coup de pistolet. Ce monstre avoit vécu 35 ans. sa taille étoit de 5 pieds 2 pouces. il avoit la phisionomie un peu renfrognée, le teint livide et bilieux.

Ses passions dominantes étoient l'orgueil, la haine et la jalousie. Rien ne pouvoit étancher sa soif du sang humain; il auroit voulu régner seul sur des débris, des déserts et des morts.

* *le 20 Prairial l'an 2, (8 Juin 1794)*

* *Robespierre dans l'Anti-salle du Comité de salut public, la nuit du 9 au 10 Thermidor, an 2ème de la République.*

PORTRAIT XI.

MAXIMILIEN ROBESPIERRE, DEPUTY OF ARTOS,

To the States-general of 1789, and Deputy of Paris to the national Convention.

Executed July 27 1794.

In tracing the portraiture of the most execrable of tyrants, our heart is frozen with horror, and the pen almost falls from our hand. It is nevertheless necessary to describe to posterity the man who exterminated one part of France, and who, had he lived longer would have destroyed the other. Robespierre was a native of Arras, an advocate of no shining talents, and was appointed by his intrigues deputy to the states-general in 1789. From the moment of his installation, he devoted himself to the cause of the people, whom he was one day to massacre. The inflexible patriotism which he affected until the division in the constituent assembly, obtained him the name of the *incorruptible.*

Being chosen anew to the national convention, he attached himself to the party of Orleans, and vowed to him an inviolable friendship. But when this last was ruined, he abandoned him to strengthen his own party, and conceived the design of raising himself to the dictatorship. His profound hypocrisy made him attain it; a general terror maintained him in it; the destructive rapidity of a thunderbolt can alone convey an idea of the abuses of his enormous power. France was another large Bastille; the guillotines were not equal to the sacrifice of so many victims. Recourse was had to (*fusillades*, *noiades*, and *mitraillades*) means of destruction as new as the crimes they were intended to punish. Infatuated by his power and the popular incense, it was his ambition to be at the same time sovereign Pontiff and dictator. He had the audacity, at the festival to the supreme Being at which he presided, to raise his hands stained with the blood of citizens towards the beneficent author of nature. But God rejected his execrable hommage, the fall of the tyrant was the almost immediate consequence of this audacity. He was decreed to be arrested on that very daywhich he had chosen to declare himself dictator.

He fled for refuge to that commune which had conspired against him; he was out-lawed, arrested, and brought to the scaffold, after having in vain tried to kill himself with a pistol. This monster was 35 years of age, in stature about five feet two inches. He had a countenance coarse and repulsive, a complexion livid and sallow.

His prevailing passions were pride, hatred, and jealousy: nothing could quench his thirst of human blood. He seemed as if desirous to reign alone, in a general devastation—in a desert—or among the dead.

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AIMÉE-CÉCILE-RENAUD,

JUGÉE LE 29 PRAIRIAL, L'AN 2,

de la République française.

La jalousie étoit une des passions les plus impérieuses de Robespierre: il avoit vu avec peine combien les Sections et les Sociétés populaires avoient pris d'intérêt à l'assassinat qu'on venoit de tenter sur Collot-d'Herbois; il résolut de ramener sur lui, à quelque prix que ce fût l'attention publique. Ce fut dans ces circonstances que la visite d'une jeune fille qui s'étoit présentée chez lui, pendant son absence, lui procura le triomphe qu'il désiroit.

Robespierre avoit nuit et jour dans son anti-chambre plusieurs jacobins robustes qui lui tenoient lieu de gardes. C'est à leur zèle officieux que sont dûs les malheurs de la jeune Renaud et de sa famille. Elle existoit, dans un des quartiers de Paris, qui sont le plus consacrés au travail: son pere, exerçoit le commerce de papeterie. Cécile Renaud donnoit ses soins aux détails de la boutique; elle étoit agée de vingt ans. la nature lui avoit donné une de ces figures piquantes qui plaisent souvent plus que la beauté. On a prétendu que Robespierre avoit fait guillotiner son amant; mais cette conjecture ne s'est pas trouvée avoir la moindre vraisemblance pour base. Ce fut le 4 prairial, l'an 2, au soir, qu'elle se présenta chez Robespierre. ses satellites lui font mille questions, auxquelles elle répond avec un ton d'assurance qui les choque. „tu as, lui dit l'un d'eux, formé quelque dessein criminel. que venois tu faire ici?„ j'y venois, répondit la jeune Renaud, pour voir quelle figure avoit un tyran. „conduite aussitôt au comité de sureté générale, on lui demanda pourquoi elle s'étoit munie d'un paquet de hardes. „c'est pour aller, dit elle, à la prison, et de là à la guillotine„ On lui observa qu'on avoit trouvé deux couteaux sur elle; mais elle soutint qu'elle n'avoit eu intention de faire mal à personne. Livrée au tribunal révolutionnaire elle fut condamnée à mort. On égorga jusqu'à son vieux pere, sa tante, enfin la majeure partie de sa famille.

C'était encore trop peu; soixante personnes enchaînées depuis six mois dans les cachots furent désignées comme complices d'une jeune fille qu'elles n'avaient jamais vue. L'infortunée Renaud fut placée sur la premiere charrette à coté de la jeune Sainte-Amaranthe. huit voitures étoient remplies de ces victimes revêtues du linceul pourpré des assassins. hélas! c'étoient huit voitures chargées d'innocens qu'on immoloit à la conservation..... de qui?..... d'un tigre altéré de sang.

* Aimée-Cécile-Renaud, arrêtée chez Robespierre, le 4 Prairial, an 2e. de la République.

PORTRAIT XII.

AIMÉE CÉCILE RENAUD,

CONDEMNED PRAIRIAL 29 1793.

JEALOUSY was one of the most predominant passions of Robespierre; he beheld with chagrin the general alarm which the attempted assassination of Collot-d'Herbois had excited. He resolved to return to the attack whatever it might cost him, and it was in these circumstances that the singular visit of a young girl accelerated his purpose. Robespierre was surrounded day and night with his jacobin friends, who served him instead of guards. It is to their officious zeal that the misfortunes of the young Renaud and her family must be imputed. She was about twenty years of age, and kept her Father's shop, who was a stationer in Paris. Nature had endowed her with one of those figures which by a peculiar air of vivacity pleases still more than beauty. It was said that Robespierre had caused the death of her lover; but that conjecture is without foundation. In the evening of the 4 Prairial 1793, she presented herself at the house of Robespierre: what is your purpose? demanded the satellites of the dictator: I am come, said she, to see what the figure of a tyrant is. Being immediately conducted to the committee of public safety she was asked why she had provided herself with clothes; to which she boldly replied: to live decently in the prison, to which I know, I must be sent, and to die decently upon the scaffold, which I know awaits me. A small knife was found upon her person; but she denied that she had any purpose beyond what she had confessed. The revolutionary tribunal condemned her to death; her father, her aunt and the greater part of her family, shared her fate.

Nor was this enough: six months after, sixty persons were arrested and condemned as the accomplices of one whom they had never seen. The unfortunate Renaud was placed by the side of the young St. Amaranthe. Eight carts were filled with these victims to the horrible tyranny of Robespierre. But the vengeance of the great being of nature — that providence who permits wickedness its course, for some wise purpose, was suspended only to fall with a more terrible effect.

Inscription: Aimée Cécile Renaud arrested at the house of Robespierre 4 Prairial 1794.

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